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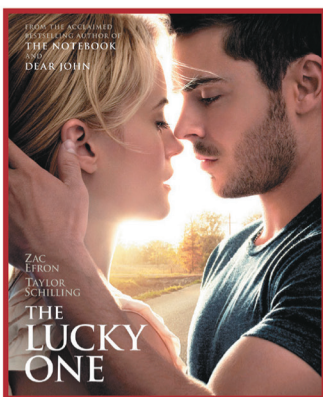




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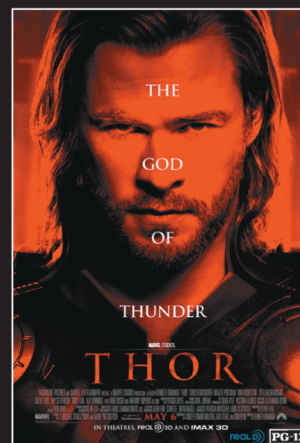
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**Managing Editor** Andy Lien 612-436-4671

**Editor Emeritus** Ethan Boatner 612-436-4670

**Editorial Associate** George Holdgrafer 612-436-4672

**Copy Editor** Bridget Rocheford-Kearney

**Volunteers** Kaitlyn E. Walsh, Kathleen Watson, Toni Meyers, Emily Heinbockel, Shane Lueck, Bianca Catibog, Lannie Walker, Meghan O'Connor, Emma Nelson

**Contributors** Scott Endres, Heidi Fellner, Emily Heinbockel, Ed Huyck, Justin Jones, Ellen Krug, Toni Meyers, Steve Lenius, Jennifer Parello, Edward Piechowski & Sean Ryan, Joy Summers, John Townsend, Carla Waldemar, Randy Stern, Kristin Thompson, Shane Lueck, Bianca Catibog, Lannie Walker, Meghan O'Connor, Emma Nelson, Kathleen Watson

## Advertising

**Sales & Advertising Director** Barry Leavitt 612-436-4690

**Senior Account Executive** Suzanne Farrell 612-436-4699

**Account Executive** Scott Belcher 612-436-4675

**Advertising Associate** George Holdgrafer 612-436-4672

**Advertising Intern** Logan Halla 612-436-4697

**Sales & Advertising Traffic Coordinator**

Linda Raines 612-436-4694

**Classifieds** Suzanne Farrell 612-436-4699

**National Sales Representative** Rivendell Media  
212-242-6863

## Creative

**Creative Director** Hubert Bonnet 612-436-4678

**Multimedia Designer** Mike Hnida 612-436-4679

**Photographer** Sophia Hantzes

**Lavender Studios** Hubert Bonnet, Mike Hnida, Austin Lindstrom

## Administration

**Publisher** Lavender Media, Inc.

**President & CEO** Stephen Rocheford 612-436-4665

**Vice President & CC** Pierre Tardif 612-436-4666

**Chief Financial Officer** Carolyn Lima 612-436-4664

**Administrative Assistant** Austin Lindstrom 612-436-4661

**Founders** George Holdgrafer, Stephen Rocheford

**Inspiration** Steven W. Anderson (1954-1994), Timothy J. Lee (1968-2002), Russell Berg (1957-2005), Kathryn Rocheford (1914-2006), Jonathan Halverson (1974-2010)

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**FAIRVIEW**





**NONPROFITS.** My second job out of college was as a fundraiser for orphans in Latin America and the Caribbean. Orphans. It doesn't get much more fundraisey than that. Great work, great mission, good feelings. Then, as I got older, I tried to stay involved with nonprofits even when I no longer worked for one—I volunteered, I promoted, and I donated. Then, I lost my job.

Back in the summer of 2009, I had been working for a luxury architect and homebuilder. Talented and ethical bosses, they kept us employed longer than they should have as the industry tanked. When the lay-off finally happened, it was the other shoe dropping. We'd been waiting. It wasn't personal, it was business.

Plenty of folks run through the scenarios in their heads, "What would I do if I lost my job tomorrow?" Many think, "Oh, I'd cut my cell phone." Cable TV, a vacation, eating out—those tend to be on the chopping block. What I found was that I couldn't live without many of those things; cell phones, internet connection, and eating out had become more integral to networking and business than ever before—especially when I had no physical presence in an office, only the green chair in my apartment in St. Paul. I had to be present somewhere. I had to keep myself out there and available. People had to know what I was up to and that I was very employable.

This lasted two years. Call it what you want; depending on the day, I'd say I was unemployed, underemployed, consulting, freelancing, and jobless. The euphemisms were for when they mattered; they could be integral to interviews or when the ego was suffering just too much. Sometimes, I referred to myself as jobless, simply to get the point across that it was a state of employment rather than a personality flaw. It was a big head game but I was usually winning.

Unfortunately, I'm certain that there is a multitude of people out there who can relate when I refer to just how psychologically taxing it is to apply for jobs that we're both over- and under-qualified to perform. Not getting interviews, not getting offers, not getting call-backs—it all chips away at the sense of self I had when I was "Director of" in my last few positions. The arbitrary nature of the employment game became a subject of study for me. There was no pattern to discern. There were no ploys or strategies that were useful as general application tactics. All bets were off. There were simply too many of us for too few jobs.

I didn't lapse into a malaise. Not really. I had my moments, I guess, but I was fairly grounded in the reality that I just had to take things as they came. I started as a statistic. According to some people, I was a drain on society. I was leeching from the government while popping bon-bons and watching daytime television (despite cutting the cable). I was balancing negative perceptions of the unem-

ployed—as a group—while just trying to survive—as a single person. I didn't have to move home, thankfully, though it was always a welcome option (thanks to having awesome parents). But, as I fell off unemployment insurance, exhausted COBRA, and became a more nebulous statistic that didn't even count as unemployed, I was able to maintain a hold on my purpose and my hope.

How?

I volunteered.

One of the most eye-opening moments of my adult life was when I really saw how much better I had it than so many other people, even when my chips were down. My unemployment check was more than most made working 40 hours a week, though it was a fraction of what I was used to making. I didn't do anything terribly special to deserve this status, I simply put one foot in front of the other and followed the path laid out for me: High school, college, job with benefits and a nice salary. It was humbling, this privileged path. And, it was hard to figure out what I could do about it.

As I was downsizing my life, I upsized my involvement. I found communities that had no money and I helped. I designed websites. I developed campaigns for start-ups. I served on committees and groups. I was the busiest unemployed person by virtue of my volunteering. It kept me sane and it made me feel good. And crazy.

I never lost my edge because of this volunteering way of life. No wondering if I could still type 80wpm, no wondering if I could still handle the Adobe Design software, no wondering if I could develop WordPress websites with plugins and integration galore. I had it. And it prepared me for this job. My portfolio grew. I was still writing. Reunions happened and I co-chaired the committees. I was open about needing a job at every post I accepted and every function I attended.

I had purpose. A presence. A place to be. And I was needed.

As good as it felt to give of my talents while I felt like I had less than I've ever had, it still felt that much better to finally donate my first \$5 to a nonprofit again after I got this job. I'm only ten months into being employed again and the headgames are long over—I can do this job and I'm doing it well. But the lasting impact of joblessness will be with me for a long time as will the lessons I learned.

What I found during my years of joblessness is that nobody can really give advice that would apply broadly to all—you can only pick and choose from what other people have learned. Follow your instincts. My instincts told me to get involved and help others.

And to keep heart.

With thanks,

Andy ■





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## Race, Ethnicity, and the Status Quo

COLUMNIST LEONARD PITTS, Jr. recently made some telling remarks on the subject of race in relation to the case of Trayvon Martin, the unarmed teenager who was shot to death February 26 in Sanford, Florida, by neighborhood watchperson George Zimmerman.

"I'm here to explain why George Zimmerman is white," Pitts began, referring to a reader's letter he had received that complained, "Mr. Zimmerman was Hispanic not White plez (sic) do your homework before writing your column!!!"

"Hispanic' is not a race," Pitts pointed out, "but an ethnicity," and noted that one's ethnicity was, until relatively recently, how a person primarily thought of himself. Slaves in their native cultures did not think of themselves as "black" but as a member of whatever their tribe of origin.

"Black" was used to separate the enslaved from those who had a right to call their lives their own. I wrote here that the designations "heterosexual" and "homosexual" (1886) are of relatively recent origin; in similar fashion, "black" and "white" were not always used as they are today, and "whiteness" was not something automati-

cally guaranteed to anyone with a pale skin. As waves of Irish, Polish, Armenian, Greeks and other groups arrived on America's shores, they had to fight for acceptance. While not thought of literally as "black," they, and numerous other ethnicities, were discriminated against by those looking down from a higher, whiter rung of the sociological ladder. Bigots today continue to manipulate language in order to divide and to create sources to foment fear of those who are different, and incite people to violent or discriminatory behavior.

I have recently seen hateful cartoons of the Obamas, directed at their blackness, and personally know folks who would rather follow any wild assertion or speculation to discredit the President rather than admit their antagonism stems from their own prejudice.

A friend recently mentioned that he believes a major problem racists have with Obama is not even that he is black, but that his mother is white—an ugly thought probing into deeper and murkier layers of racism. A thought I even dislike writing down; but which I have to consider.

We've come a long way in this country in matters of race—but not nearly as far as we believe. □

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# OUTFRONT MN LOBBY DAY

MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL - MARCH 29



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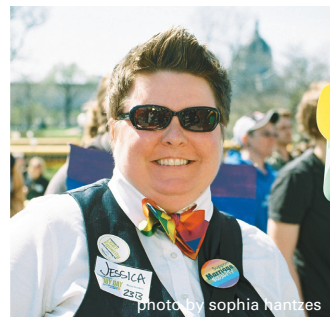


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CLUB UNDERGROUND - MARCH 31



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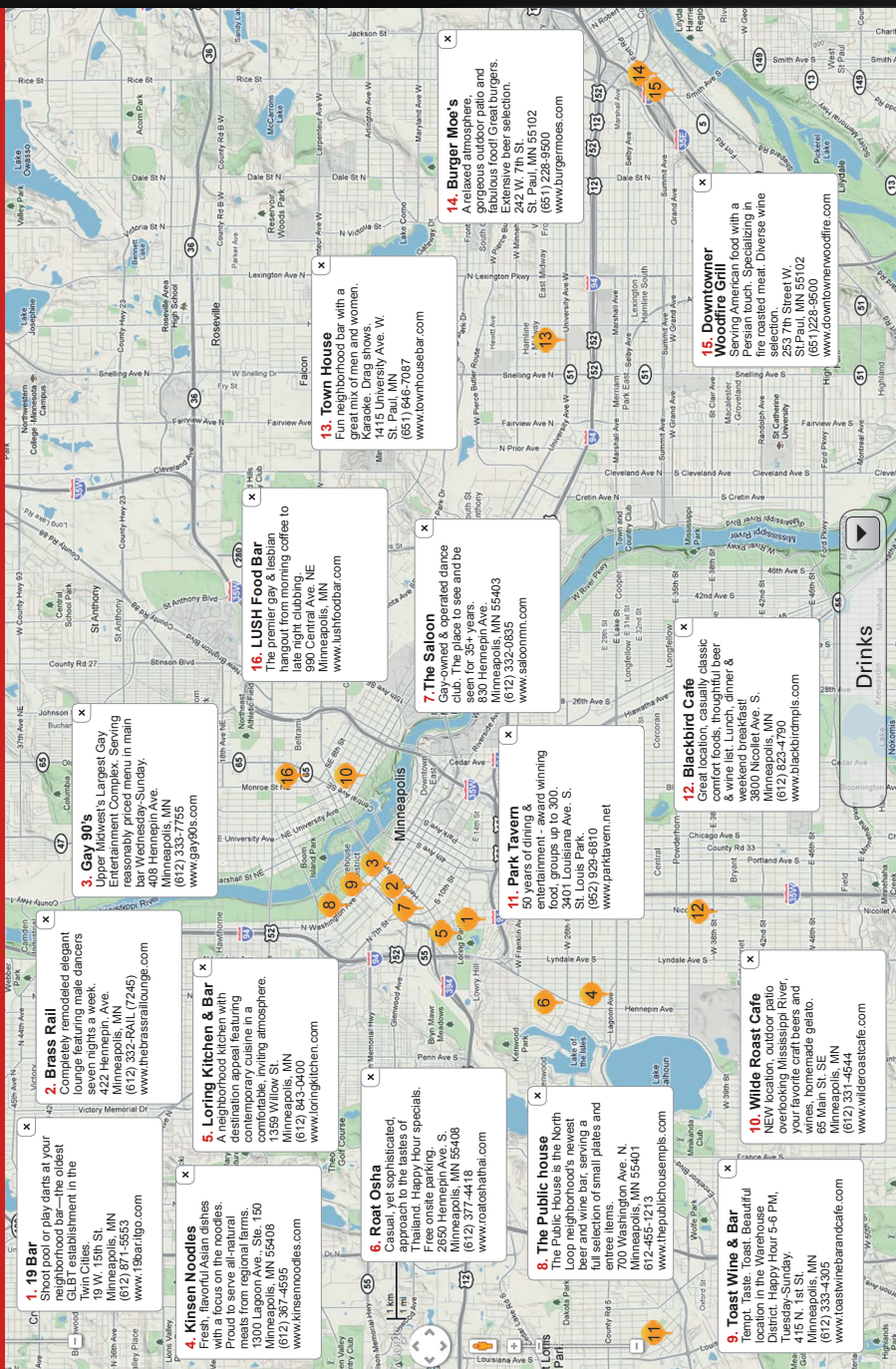
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# The Saloon Celebrates 35th Anniversary with Two Parties

Owners Anderson and Moore Set Two Historic Milestones

IN MARCH 1977, when the Saloon in Downtown Minneapolis opened its doors, James (Andy) Anderson and John Moore came on board as bartenders from the first day. They bought the establishment in December 1981, becoming the first openly gay owners of a Twin Cities gay bar. Having been at the helm of the Saloon for more than 30 years now, they hold the local longevity record for proprietorship of a GLBT bar.

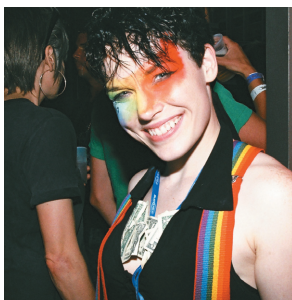
Over the years, the Saloon has stood the test of time as a popular gathering place for our community. Its hallmark always has been the best dance music. During myriad fundraisers, the bar has channeled thousands of dollars to local charitable organizations such as OutFront Minnesota, The Aliveness Project, PrideAlive, One Heartland, and the Imperial Court of Minnesota, to name just a few.

To celebrate its 35th anniversary, the Saloon is hosting two gala events the last weekend in April:

- On April 27, starting at 9 PM, a wedding-themed party features fetching groomsmen and bridesmaids, complete with a garter throw, a catching of the bouquet, and a couple's photo booth. It's a benefit for Minnesotans United for All Families (MUAFF), which battles the antigay marriage amendment on the ballot Election Day this November, with the entire \$5 cover going to the beneficiary. That same night at the bar (9 PM) is the after-party for the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus's benefit concert to fight the amendment—5-8 PM preceding at The Woman's Club of Minnesota, 410 Oak Grove Street, Minneapolis, cosponsored by the Saloon.

- On April 28, Noon-2 AM, an all-day/all-night anniversary party at the Saloon offers a bevy of entertainment; drink and food specials; giveaways of merchandise displaying the bar's new logo; and unveiling of other new branding items. Watch for updates as the party draws closer.

Saloon General Manager Tim Balfanz



(Above) Longtime Saloon owners James (Andy) Anderson (left) and John Moore. Archival Photos by Sophia Hantzes

promises, "We're going to blow it out of the water to celebrate the long history of the Saloon." □

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KARE 11's Sven Sundgaard and Rena Sarigianopoulos are the celebrity spokespeople for Dining Out for Life, pictured here at Toast Wine Bar in Minneapolis. Photos by Hubert Bonnet

# Dining Out For Life

warm glow of a glorious meal. To be able to enjoy my favorite places and know that just by doing what I enjoy most, I can help people who really need it. The Aliveness Project continues to serve those afflicted with HIV/AIDS – a disease that continues to be insidious despite many medical breakthroughs. Through empowerment, they do everything from organizing events, shuttling people to doctor's appointments, and providing meal services – a holistic approach to those living with the disease. What better way to help out a program whose focus is on living than by raising a glass and sharing a meal? So many choices, here are a few of my recommendations: ➔

Continued on page 24





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Rena and Sven dishing it up at Toast Wine Bar (donating to Dining Out for Life at the 50% level). Photo by Hubert Bonnet

#### DINNER RESTAURANTS:

**128 Café** is a sweet little neighborhood joint that's perfect for tucking away for a quiet evening of playing catch-up with friends. The warm wood paneling in the front room lends a cozy feeling of intimacy. There are also a few coveted seats outside along Cleveland Avenue in St. Paul's charming Merriam Park neighborhood. Owner Jill Wilson is always on site and does everything from greeting guests and pouring wine to waiting tables. She's an owner fully invested in making each dining experience a memorable, enjoyable affair. The menu changes seasonally, but the one constant is the award-winning ribs. While the ribs are revelatory, the rest of the menu deserves exploring. It's a small, tidy affair with thoughtful, beautifully prepared selections. Succulent Amish chicken is glazed with a zippy chipotle pan sauce, accompanied by bacon-studded baby veggies. But, allow one moment for the ribs, wonderfully smoked and topped with a mahogany sauce with just a little sweetness, a little zippy spice, and so much fun to eat in an environment that comes with white linen napkins. The expertly selected wine list perfectly pairs with each tasty bite. Donating 25% of dinner sales.

**Birchwood Café** is ground zero for farm to table dining for conscious eaters. The bright white restaurant is always lined with bikes. The tables stretch out from inside to the outdoors. The walls are hyper-colorful, and the interior space is casual.

The comfy room welcomes eaters at any time of day. The food is full of vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free and regular ol' omnivore options. They've also got a great kid's menu that goes beyond the usually depressingly unhealthy children's options, so this is a great place to bring the whole family (owner Tracy Singleton's adorable little sprite of a daughter is often on site as well.) The food is highly flavorful and wholly satisfying. Breakfast highlights are the veggie crammed free-range egg omelet and the sweet savory waffle, served with local, organic, and most importantly, *real* maple syrup. For lunch, the Sunny Day sandwich can convert even the most ardent carnivore, with orange-marinated tempeh, sunflower seed pate, golden beets, carrots and avocado; it's crunchy, creamy, salty, sweet, and honestly does taste like a kiss of sunshine. For dinner, try one of their little pizzas or one of the featured entrees like the zippy chicken stew with ginger, coconut lemongrass broth, served with a side of naan. Quaff a little local brew from Surly or Lift Bridge or a glass of sustainable wine. Donating 35% of dinner sales.

**Blackbird Café** is the Phoenix of Minneapolis. Rising from the ashes of the fire that destroyed their restaurant, they relocated to a new neighborhood and began a new era. The new space is beautiful with tall ceilings and plenty of sunlight inside a gothic exterior. What remains the same is that this is still a family-run spot, owned by



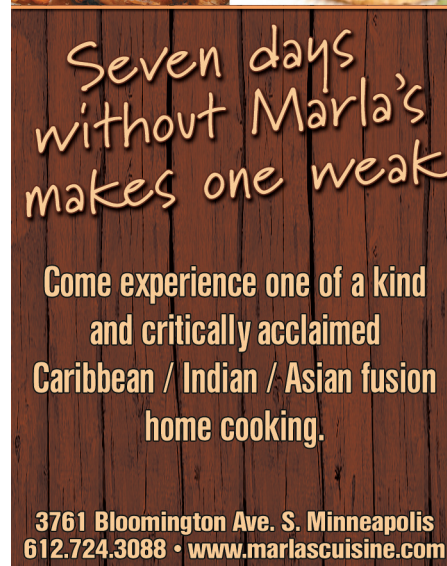
husband and wife team Gail Mollner and Chris Stevens. Rather than laying down, rolling over, or hiding from the awful reality of the devastation, they came back with this restaurant that is possibly even better than it had been before. The food is a playful take on all different sorts of cuisines. There are empandas, bahn mi, and fried walleye riffs. Every bite is packed with flavor, familiar while often surprising. Take the bahn mi–shredded pork that in appearance that is nothing like a traditional bahn mi (the Vietnamese sandwich with meat, pate, a cucumber slice and jalapenos). The flavors are all still there, though. It's unctuous, spicy, bright, savory and crunchy all on a ciabatta roll, rather than the traditional baguette. It shouldn't work, but it does so well that I'm still dreaming about it. Entrees include hearty, homey braised short ribs or a whatever-the-market allows fish special. Donating 40% of lunch and dinner sales.

**Ngon** on University is committed to using local, sustainable sources for their ingredients, and the flavors show. The menu is mainly Vietnamese with a few other influences from the Midwest and around the world. The crispy wrapped rabbit wonton appetizer is a sweet curry that packs a full-on wallop of astounding flavor packed into a few dainty bites. The pho is known far and wide for the flavor-drenched broth full of accoutrements like beef, limes, bean sprouts, and jalapeños mixed in with a mess of clear noodles. Entrees are hearty like steak, short ribs and braised pork shoulder. The sunny interior is lined with local art and the eclectic mix of music played creates a hip, comfortable vibe. On days when the interior sunshine isn't enough, Ngon also has a fantastic patio out back that's a garden oasis in the heart of the industrial city. Donating 35% of dinner sales.

**Piccolo** is a sweet little spot that serves artful, gorgeous, tidy, plates of food. They proudly fly in the gargantuan mindset of the "bigger is better" and "more is never enough" gluttony that so many Mid-westerners are accused of, and the result is one of the best, if not the best restaurant in the cities. Chef Doug Flicker is a culinary master and each plate he serves is a taste revelation. No ingredient is too humble; the duck liver braunschweiger is certainly not going to be familiar to your grandmothers bridge crowd. Elegance is served with a subtle wink and smile. This is the sort of restaurant where it's easy to check your opinions at the door and put your evening in the hands of the capable staff. From wine to menu selection, the entire experience is likely to be flawless. A few menu items will satisfy a modest appetite, or bring some friends and order the entire menu. Donating 35% of dinner sales.

**Solera** restaurant has lived on through quite a few eras. Different owners and chefs have come and gone, and the restaurant has continued to serve. The latest chef, Jorge Guzman, has once again breathed new life into the old girl. Guzman is passionate about local, sustainably raised ingredients and uses them whenever possible. He is also constantly evolving the menu to bring huge flavors to even the tiniest of dishes. My favorite way to enjoy an evening at Solera is to do it up Spanish-style with plenty of drink and round after round of salty and spicy little plates. I'm a little bit addicted to the prawns, served head on in a bath of garlic chili olive oil. After they're devoured, the oil is wonderful for dipping bread. The Iberico ham is a Spanish delicacy, and if you close your eyes and breathe deeply, you can taste the acorns the pigs once feasted on. The *setas y papas* are rich, earthy mushrooms mixed with perfectly fried potatoes and are so addictive and munch-able, it's hard to order only one plate. Their cocktails also don't get enough attention. The Chef's Shot—a shot of Maker's Mark and a drink of Fever-Tree ginger ale—is the sort of thing that's been to blame for a few late nights and rough mornings. That might not technically be a cocktail, though. Another one to try is the Old Spaniard made with toasty Mt. Gay rum muddled with fresh mint and mixed with amontillado sherry—divine. Donating 35% of dinner sales.

**Toast Wine Bar** may not be a regular haunt for those outside the lucky souls who live in the North Loop area, but it ought to be. With their easy, breezy vibe, it's the perfect location to dip in for a little nosh, a little top shelf wine at affordable prices or even a full-on cocktail. (Try the 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel vodka over ice—it's like making out with a super sexy iceberg—crisp, clean and shockingly awesome.) The pizzas are of the cracker-thin crust variety. Try the mortadella and provolone pizza topped with an egg. The rich yolk acts as a sauce, mingling with a little herby, fried egg; this is the sort of thing I could eat morning, noon and night. The entire menu is built for sipping and nibbling. Try the luxurious burrata, a fresh cheese made with mozzarella and cream; it is a gooey, succulent, young cheese served in a variety of ways, like with a little peppery arugula tossed with Serrano ham and drizzled with balsamic vinegar. Sitting out on the patio is so delightfully urban,





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**CC Club** – For a little punk rock break (breakfast, lunch, & dinner 20%)

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**Firelake** – Start the day downtown with this locavore friendly menu (breakfast 50%)

**Hazel's** – Sweet NE neighborhood joint that serves the ooey-gooiest turkey sandwich known to man: the Audubon (breakfast, lunch, & dinner 35%)

**Hot Plate** – Breakfast comfort food in this funky, kitschy spot (breakfast & lunch 35%)

**Rustica** – Simply one of the best bakeries ever serving fabulous coffee and irresistible chocolate cookies (breakfast, lunch, & dinner 40%)

**Wilde Roast** – The stunning new location makes it easy to want to stretch out and spend all day in our favorite neighborhood café (breakfast, lunch, & dinner 35%)

**Yum** – But what to do if you don't feel like going out? Hit up Yum for some tasty take out – like their resuscitating chicken soup or hearty mac n cheese (breakfast, lunch, & dinner take-out 35%) □



## NEWSY BITS

**Corner Table** – The single best bite of food I had this month came from this little neighborhood darling. The paperwork is finally all pushed through, and the new owners are Nick and Chenny Rancone. The pork topped masa cake is bang-on-the-table, moan-inducing amazing. The website is still down, but trust my tummy, every item on this menu is heavenly. Take the leap of faith and check them out tonight.

The **Solo Vino** rosé season is fast approaching. They'll kick off with the tent party on Sunday May 20th in their parking lot. Sample glass after glass of wonderful rosés for only \$30. There will be many more fun events coming from them this summer all featuring these pretty, pink wines.

In addition to the Left Handed Cook, **El Burrito Mercado** will also be opening up inside of Midtown Global Market.

**Target Field** is serving up some new food for Twins baseball season, continuing to move beyond the ballpark franks. The talk of the town were the fried pickles, but I think the tastiest item was the mammoth meatball stuffed with gooey cheese. Even better, the Fulton and Surly beer selections are a welcome addition to the game experience.

We're sad to say goodbye to **Caribe**, the small restaurant location that I hate to love continues to break my heart. From Chet's Taverna to Jay's and now Caribe, the spot may indeed be cursed. The light rail construction chased away many of their customers. While the owners, Tony & Heidi Panelli hope to one day make a comeback, for now we say goodbye. □



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# Latina

By **ENRIQUE URUETA**  
Directed by **MARK VALDEZ**  
**APRIL 20 – MAY 13**

PREVIEW  
**APRIL 19**

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The protagonist of Shakespeare's tragedy is actually *not* the title character, rather, it's Marcus Brutus. Volumes have been written and spoken about to what extent Brutus's ego undoes him. But for director Carin Bratlie's all-female production, actress Noe Tallen who plays that role, doesn't necessarily see him that way. Thanks to her research, she points out that the play's real protagonist "wants to preserve the Republic, to keep it for the citizens. Caesar (Kirby Bennett) is trying to change the Republic to a monarchy, to have complete control and change Rome."

That said, Tallen thinks Brutus's tragic flaw is "the presumption that others are as loyal to Rome as he is. He trusts too easily. He forgives too easily. He doesn't see how the world works. And he doesn't anticipate how the agendas of others will foil his plans. He is not a stupid man, just naive to the potential corruption that often comes with power."

Regarding the all female casting, dramaturg Christine 'Kit' Gordon notes that "the deep friendship between Brutus and Cassius (Katie Willer), the

profound loyalty of Mark Antony (Katherine Kupiecki), the dedication of the soldiers under Brutus and Cassius's command, are not necessarily male traits. Having these roles played by women, however, allows us to see the characters in a somewhat different light. Would Cassius have been considered hysterical as a result of his anger management problems if he were a woman? Occasionally in the script, the characters also use gender-specific language that defines women as less than fully human – or at least as fully human as men: early in Act I, when Cassius speaks with Casca (Anissa Siobhan Brazill), a fellow conspirator, he says:

*Let it be who it is: for Romans now*

*Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors; But woe the while! our fathers' minds are dead,*

*And we are govern'd with our mothers' spirits;*

*Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish.*

Yet the women in the play can be as bold as the men: Brutus's wife Portia (Rachel Finch) wounds herself to prove to her husband that she can be trusted. Caesar himself initially takes his wife Calpurnia's (Carin Leonard-Gorrill) fears for his safety seriously, but then is dissuaded when it's suggested that he's less than a man for doing so.

Gordon concludes "so in this very masculine world, what's defined as womanish is disparaged, and yet many of the virtues and behaviors exhibited by the male characters could, in a different context, be seen as something more broadly human, if not specifically female. Having women play the roles allows us to consider our own assumptions about human behavior." ➔

Continued on page 30



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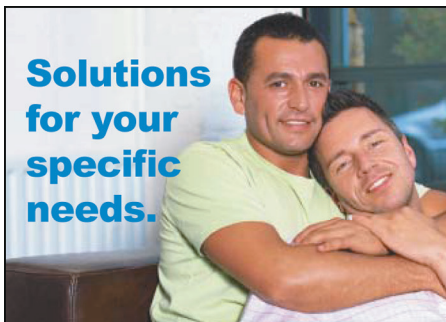
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**Learn to Be Latina****Through May 13****Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 So. 4th St.,  
Mpls.****(612) 338-6131****www.mixedbloodtheatre.com***Learn to Be Latina. Photo by Rich Ryan*

Categorical 'one size fits all' definitions for identity can often be counted as serious flaws not only in general media, but in the various civil rights movements, including GLBT rights, as well. Playwright Enrique Urueta satirizes this in a comedy whose title you may not expect to have prominent lesbian themes. He considers what happens when someone of Middle-Eastern descent feels compelled to pose as Latina (because Latin descent is more acceptable to mainstream America) if she is to pursue a show biz career. Moreover, Urueta then layers in how being a lesbian will further figure into that charade.

Director Mark Valdez says that in "drawing parallels between racial and sexual identity, the story looks at the difficulties of coming out. Enrique's approach uses humor to reveal ourselves to us – in this case the absurdity and small-mindedness of bigotry."

Jamie Elvey who plays protagonist Hanan relates that her character "is Lebanese-American and in post-9/11 US, she is dealing with the very real prejudice against Arabs. Hanan's dream is to be a pop star, but she is told that because of her ethnicity she is 'not marketable' to the masses. I think Hanan is so compelling because she really doesn't fully fit within any world that she's living in. She's not 'Lebanese' enough in her parents' minds and she's certainly not 'American' enough for everyone else. Along with the negotiation of her ethnicity comes her sexual awakening which potentially pushes her even further from her pop star dreams. Hanan is the antithesis of what we think a pop star should be. She is expected to reinvent herself, giving up everything in order to pursue her love of music. Perception is everything, and as an Arab lesbian, she is out of America's comfort zone."

Hope Cervantes also plays a lesbian character, Blanca, which means 'white' in English, but who happens to be Chicana and dark-skinned. Cervantes describes her as "grounded and knows who she is and never apologizes for it. She falls in love with Hanan and knows the mu-

sic industry is not fair or forgiving of people who are 'different'. She never waivers in her beliefs and stays by Hanan through Hanan's self-discovery."

**Analyzing the Bully****May 3, 4 & 5****499 Wacouta St., St. Paul****(612) 481-2234****www.blankslatetheatre.com**

For all its good intentions, and stunning evidence, the anti-bullying campaign of the past few years often gets entrenched in a smug style of categorical thinking that conservatives sometimes rightly accuse liberals of. (We've also seen similar patterns regarding the Trayvon Martin tragedy.) Perhaps, not since the heyday of controversial conclusions by feminists Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon has the Left been in such need of pushing the 'reset' button.

Thankfully, director Adam Arnold and his teen actors have gotten beyond the hype with what promises to be yet another intriguing Blank Slate company-created play. Arnold says he has become alarmed at the lack of compassion, nuance, and science, that media, schools, and certain anti-bullying efforts have put forth. He says the collaboration "shows not only the dangers of bullying behaviors and the impact it can have on its victims, it uniquely shows the perspective of a bully. Not as someone who needs shaming, nor as someone who desires to hurt others because he is evil and loves to do evil for evil's sake. Persons who bully are human beings, are often in deep pain themselves, and it is this pain that is driving their cruelty toward others. Bullies are not all the same. We are hoping to show that most bullies have been -and some are continuing to be- victims in some area of their life, and that this complex, serious topic deserves more than slogans and stickers and posters."

*The Mill. Photo by Kevin McLaughlin***The Mill****Through May 5****Playwrights Center, 2301 E. Franklin Av., Mpls.****(800) 838-3006****www.workhauscollective.org**

International Falls, MN was a union town when playwright Jeannine Coulombe was growing up. Her father, step-father, and uncles worked in a paper mill, as well as her friends' fathers, uncles, and grandfathers. Moreover, friends she grew up with still work there. In Coulombe's formative years The Mill's Friday payday meant an immediate influx of money for groceries and dry goods. Restaurants actually increased staffing just for payday. A classic example of how when the working class spends money it swiftly and directly impacts the grass roots economy.

Coulombe shares "my father came home with a pink slip several times when I was a child. Layoffs happened. Strikes occurred. But in the end, he did retire after giving most of his life to The Mill. ➡

Continued on page 33



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David DeBlieck in *Que(e)ries*. Photo by Brad Ruud

## Que(e)ries at Patrick's Cabaret Celebrates The Gay Male Sensibility

Just what is a gay sensibility? Should those who suppress their orientation even count? But what about those in times or places where it could not be shown unless on pain of death, exile, or incarceration? Should a gay sensibility only be considered if the artists are out? But then just how out and how vocal should the gay artist be in order to be considered to have a gay sensibility? And what about straight artists who collaborate on gay-themed work?

Curators David DeBlieck, Dennis Yelkin, and Gerry Girouard will have you chewing on these questions when you see *Que(e)ries*, an evening of dance steered by out gay artists reflecting their life observations at Patrick's Cabaret. DeBlieck shares "when I started studying Dance History, I was immediately drawn to steamy photos of young, hunky Ted Shawn, often dancing with no shirt and surrounded by a gaggle of other

glistening young bucks. My gaydar went wild! More complicated images of Kazuo Ohno doing butoh in female drag opened my mind to larger issues of gender performance and embodiment."

DeBlieck's historical view will play out in 15 Poses which uses photos of the iconic ballet dancer, Nijinsky, with musical selections by Claude Debussy, Karl Zero, and Jimmy Somerville who was synonymous with the '80s gay club scene.

Yelkin draws from his own personal connection with gay history. He became aware of his sexuality in the late '50s and says "as a young boy it made me afraid and guarded of who I was. Living near San Francisco I would read newspaper stories about the tenderloin area and gay prostitution arrests. Negative as these stories were, it let me know that there were others like me. Then Stonewall happened."

In the tradition of the Patrick's venue, Yelkin will celebrate the male body electric. He curates a nude photo session on stage between photographer Robert Guttke and straight performer Jerome Bowden. Bowden grew up with a gay brother, Nic. He recalls that "a poor use of the word 'gay' was being thrown around in like third grade. My mom and my brother pretty much put an end to that right away."

Yelkin joins Girouard in a duet that, Girouard relates, "was created as a Memorial Dance for Joan Calof, a great supporter of GLBTQ people and Patrick's Cabaret. It plays with the overlapping need for touch, in desire, grief and intimacy and to just have two people of the same gender just dance together."

One of Minnesota's great veteran dancers is part of *Que(e)ries*. Jim Lieberthal says that "being invited into this particular assembly of artists has created a zone for me to do





a piece which is not usually a part of my focus. The idea of loving and referring back to that love as a focus in what I feel is a specifically gay resonance. It is part and parcel of what I will present this time around. I feel that my being out opens up shutters and allows a sensitivity to see what might be possible, along with an impetuous impertinence to actually 'go there'. That is an inheritance of my outness for which I am very grateful."

Other remarkable contributing artists are Emerson Ball, Justin Caron, Derek Phillips and Christopher Watson. □

#### **Que(e)ries**

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**Patrick's Cabaret, 3010 Minnehaha Av. S., Mpls.**

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**[www.patrickscabaret.org](http://www.patrickscabaret.org)**

## SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 30

He started working for Boise (the corporate mill owners) when he was 12, delivering the corporate-owned newspaper. But for most of his 40 years at The Mill he was a machinist. He has a pension and has enjoyed a rather comfortable retirement. And I know it was the union that made this possible for him. I can't say, however, that the generation after him will enjoy what he is able to."

The decline of a one-industry union town's economy is *The Mill's* social background, as well as the impact of economics on everyday people. Coulombe's view is not a strict slice of history but a dramatic reflection on it. She explores the idea that "shutting down The Mill is more than the idea of a factory closing and jobs being lost. [It's about] a town folding, a community being destroyed, a way of life being gone forever."

Dramatic conflict is fueled by a 1989 International Falls union riot and although over two decades have passed since then, director Matt Sciple says this is "the right political moment" for Coulombe's work to emerge. He muses "in our Occupy Era, her story of the Have Somes pitted against the Have Lesses by the Have Everythings could not be more topical. She makes us let our guard down with charm and gentle humor as discussions of flower-boxes, Minnesota winters, and the Twins, begin to coil and ripple with the unfolding events of history and the choices made in a Minnesota backyard in 1989 that change their world forever, and echo our own."

#### **What's the Word For**

**Through Apr. 21**

**Illusion Theater, 528 Hennepin Av., Mpls.**

**(612) 339-4944**

**[www.illusiontheater.org](http://www.illusiontheater.org)**

The relationship between a caretaker and the mentally disabled man she looks after is poignantly portrayed in Jeffrey Hatcher's disarming new play. Janet Caleodis (Melissa Hart), in her early 70s, acutely realizes that Hayden Harris (Michael Paul Levin), being a generation younger than she is, may not have the ability to contend with adapting to a new situation should she either pass away or become fully disabled herself.

Hart underplays the anguish to perfection. Levin, known for his bright comedic performances, explores a depth and finds layers I've never seen in his previous work. The pair's wonderful chemistry clearly owes much to the assured, gentle direction of Michael Robins. □



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1. Bert Stern: Original Madman; 2. British Guide to Showing Off; 3. Craft; 4. Farewell, My Queen; 5. Raising Renee. Photos courtesy of mspfilmfest.org

## WHAT TO EXPECT OUT OF THE MINNEAPOLIS ST. PAUL INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL THIS YEAR

It's the time of year when St. Anthony Main hosts the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. The three-week event runs through May 3 and features about 200 independent feature-length films and around 80 short films from all around the world. The festival also includes local "MINNESOTA-made" features, which were shot in Minnesota, or were created by hometown natives. Among the collection of over 200 selections from around the world is a great array of GLBT-focused films. These features elaborate on a range of topics including self-acceptance, norm

reform, and challenging stereotypes, all while brilliantly incorporating some films with quirky twists. From the experienced directors and documentarians to the fresh new names in the industry, the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival has something for everyone.

### BRITISH GUIDE TO SHOWING OFF

Directed by Jes Benstock, UK  
Noteworthy Cast: Andrew Logan, Brian Eno

This comically stimulating documentary gives audience to Andrew Logan, his tradition of the Alternative Miss World Show, and the planning leading up to his 2009 soiree. The competition follows the recognized pageant format, with a twist. Since 1972, Logan has celebrated the evolution of ordinary to extraordinary by hosting contestants hailing from different backgrounds in a gender-bending contest with drag queens, brilliantly elaborate costumes, and the best show-offs, where anything can—and will—happen. Through the film, documentarian Jes Benstock invites us to explore and get acquainted with Andrew Logan's ongoing party.

Showtimes:  
Friday, April 20, 9:00pm  
Tuesday, April 24, 4:50pm  
<http://www.britishguidetoshowingoff.com/>

### rites of passage

Directed by Jeff Roy, Thailand/USA  
Noteworthy Cast: Maya (Mohammed) Jaffer

*Rites of Passage* revolves around a 42-year-old Indo-Muslim transgender woman, Maya Jafer, undergoing gender reassignment surgery in Bangkok. Director Jeff Roy captures Maya's journey leading up to the procedure, including the emotional obstacles that appear. The film is shot in a way that acknowledges the presence of the camera, which allows truth to come through in its most raw form.

Showtimes:  
Saturday, April 21, 4:15pm  
Thursday, April 26, 9:15pm  
<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/ritesofpassagemovie/rites-of-passage-transgender-documentary>

### WISH ME AWAY

Directed by Bobbie Birleffi, Beverly Kopf, USA  
Noteworthy Cast: Chely Wright

The documentary directed by Bobbie Birleffi and Beverly Kopf focuses on Chely Wright and her journey to revealing her true self to the world. In an upbringing that focuses heavily on conservative and religion-based values, gay country musician Chely Wright had been fighting an

Continued on page 36





Theater Latté Da and the University of Minnesota present  
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Continued from page 30



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6. *The Rif Lover*; 7. *Rites of Passage*; 8. *Turn Me On, Dammit*; 9. *Where Do We Go Now*; 10. *Wish Me Away*. Photos courtesy of mspfilmfest.org

fighting an inner battle of self-acceptance and understanding. The film follows her as struggles to find peace with just being her self. Birleffi and Knopf bring us into Wright's personal plans of coming out publicly, and the aftereffects of doing so. As the first country star to come out publicly, Chely Wright broke the stereotypical barriers of her religion and culture. *Wish Me Away* reveals the transformation of the pain that once limited her, and how it now empowers her.

Showtimes:

Saturday, April 21, 4:36pm

Thursday, April 26, 9:36pm

<http://www.wishmeawaydoc.com/>

### LITTLE WORDS

Directed by Ann Prim, USA

*Little Words* is featured in the MINNESOTA SHORTS Program #3. It is the first story in The Vellum Trilogy, written by Prim. *Little Words* is set in the early 60's, and focuses on a post-modernist gay woman writer, Rhys, as she tries to get her first novel published. She prefers solitude and her writing state-of-mind to everything and everyone else.

Showtimes:

Part of Minnesota Shorts Program

Thursday, April 26, 7:00pm

### CRAFT (RISCADO)

Directed by Gustavo Pizzi, Brazil

Cast: Karine Teles, Camilo Pelegrini, Dany Roland, Otavio Muller

Bianca is a young and talented actress, aspiring to catch a break with a real part. She makes a living impersonating female celebrities, and smaller acting gigs while trying to break into the film industry. Bianca stumbles upon the opportunity of a lifetime to audition for a large motion picture. After speaking with the director, she becomes a lead in the film. Director Gustavo Pizzi creates a metaphoric narrative around the precarious career of an underbooked actress, and the insecurity in life that surrounds it.

Showtimes:

Friday, April 20, 6:30pm

Sunday, April 29, 4:45pm

<http://www.riscadofilme.com.br/index.php>

### RAISING RENEE

Directed by Steven Asher and Jeanne Jordan, USA

Noteworthy Cast: Beverly McIver, Renee McIver

Beverly McIver's career as an artist is just taking off, as an unforeseen turn of events takes away her mother's life. Years prior, Beverly had made the promise to take care of her mentally

disabled older sister. Jeanne Jordan and Steven Asher present the story of an unbroken promise, despite the obstacles and challenges our protagonist faces. Jordan and Asher will also be present during the screenings at the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival this year.

Showtimes:

Saturday, April 21, 4:45pm

Sunday, April 33, 5:00pm

[http://westcityfilms.com/raising\\_renee.html](http://westcityfilms.com/raising_renee.html)

### THE RIF LOVER

Directed by Narjiss Nejjar, Morocco, Belgium, France

Noteworthy Cast: Nadia Kounda, Mourade Zeguendi

Director Narjiss Nejjar brings us into a world of naivete and the longing for love while incorporating the classic story of Bizet's *Carmen*. Aya is a young 20-year old, with very little experience with the likes of love. After Aya and her friend see the story of *Carmen*, she longs to have the same sexual power as the story's heroine. The story begins to parallel *Carmen* when Aya's brother pimps her to a large hashish dealer, the Baron, in hopes of receiving his own cannabis field in return. Nejjar progresses the story through the narration of the heroine.



Showtimes:

Saturday, April 14, 9:45pm

Sunday, April 22, 9:15pm

### TURN ME ON, DAMMIT! (FÅ MEG PÅ, FOR FAEN)

Directed by Jannicke Systad Jacobsen, Norway

Noteworthy Cast: Helene Bergsholm, Malin Bjorhovde, Henriette Steenstrup

In this coming-of-age story of a sexually charged teenage girl, Director Jannicke Systad Jacobsen puts a quirky twist on the conventional teen's libido. After an awkward sexual awakening with her boyfriend, Artur, Alma turns to her friends, who ostracize her. Left alone, protagonist Alma becomes experimental when it comes to catering to her overactive libido. She openly gratifies herself with the help of adult hotlines, despite her mother's discomfiture. This hilariously honest film brings light to the teenage libido and the awkwardness (or lack thereof) in becoming sexually inclined.

Showtimes:

Saturday, April 28, 9:30pm

Wednesday, May 2, 7:45pm

<http://turnmeondammit.com/>

### BERT STERN: ORIGINAL MADMAN

Directed by Shannah Laumeister, USA

From the provocatively iconic photographs of Marilyn Monroe to the work he's done for Stanley Kubrick, Bert Stern is undeniably one of the most reputable celebrity photographers of this generation. In director Shannah Laumeister's first feature-length documentary, Stern's reluctant on-screen appearances make way for the truth behind his work. Stern discusses the trials and tribulations he has faced over the years, as well as his reinvention. *Bert Stern: Original Madman* brings us through a rise, fall, and reincarnation of Bert Stern's career through a lens he hasn't revealed before.

Showtimes:

Friday, April 13, 7:30pm

Saturday, April 14 7:00pm

<http://www.bertsternmadman.com/>

### FAREWELL, MY QUEEN

Directed by Benoît Jacquot, France/Spain

Noteworthy Cast: Diane Kruger, Lea Seydoux

Set during the French Revolution, *Farewell, My Queen* focuses on Marie Antoinette and Sidonie Laborde, her lady-in-waiting. As people are just beginning to fight against the rulings of King Louis XVI, the monarchy and the inner circle devise a plan to avoid the chaos. The relationship between Sidonie Laborde and her mistress define the distinct divisions between class, power, and the interplay of politics through this historical drama.

Showtime:

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# Cade Bittner

FORMER CELEBRITY assistant takes the spotlight.

Cade Bittner, a Minnesota local, has returned from adventures in both New York and L.A. to release his debut EP album "Survivor." For a 19-year-old Bittner, New York brought more than the lights of Time Square, Broadway musicals and long walks through Central Park. It was in New York that he was inspired to start writing music. He studied Integrated Theater Arts at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, which helped him perfect the craft of songwriting. "I wrote through my dreams, through love, through loss, through challenges and through self exploration," Bittner said.

Despite hitting inspiration gold his songs were filed away as he travelled to Los Angeles in search of new opportunities. "It seems that it is always the best friend that becomes the celebrity assistant," Bittner said. "And that's exactly what I did."

He started by assisting for Marissa Jaret Winokur, a Tony award winner for the musical *Hairspray*. "I wrote my music and helped her out. It was one of the best years of my life," Bittner said.

Being wrapped up in the world of celebrity assisting, Bittner's dreams of becoming a singer/songwriter took a back seat. It was while working for Debbie Gibson as her assistant that Bittner started yearning to sing again. Gibson offered Bittner the chance to lay some back-up vocal tracks for one of her new songs.

"I dropped everything and rushed into the studio," Bittner said. "I was so excited." After multiple attempts at channeling that perfect back up sound Gibson entered the recording room, breaking the news to Bittner that his voice wasn't right for what she was looking for. Gibson then went on to say that he has a lead voice. It's not the kind of voice that can be lodged into the background.

Although disappointed, Bittner couldn't help but be flattered, not to mention inspired.

"It was then that I realized I just need to go for it," Bittner said. "This realization led me home." On a roundabout journey leading him back to the Twin Cities, Bittner began piecing together the album. When trying to break into the industry with the help of a production team, it was made clear that his sexuality should not and would not be discussed.

This wasn't an option for Bittner.

"I'm gay, and that's the end of that," Bittner said.

This is what prompted him to become an independent musician and make his own way. He launched a Kickstarter campaign seeking help from friends, family, and fans to fund the production costs for the album. Due to the undeniable support that was bestowed to Bittner's endeavor, the album was produced and was everything he dreamed it could be.

Over the course of his career, being openly gay has been an occasionally trying affair. It takes thick skin, a vision, and a big personality to make it in the music industry today. Simply sitting across from him in a short interview, his enthusiasm and passion could not be ignored.

Bittner has release parties planned in the coming months in both New York and L.A. The album "Survivor" can be purchased on iTunes. □



Make-up by Melissa Taylor of The Beauty Lounge in Minneapolis; hair by Misty Johnson.





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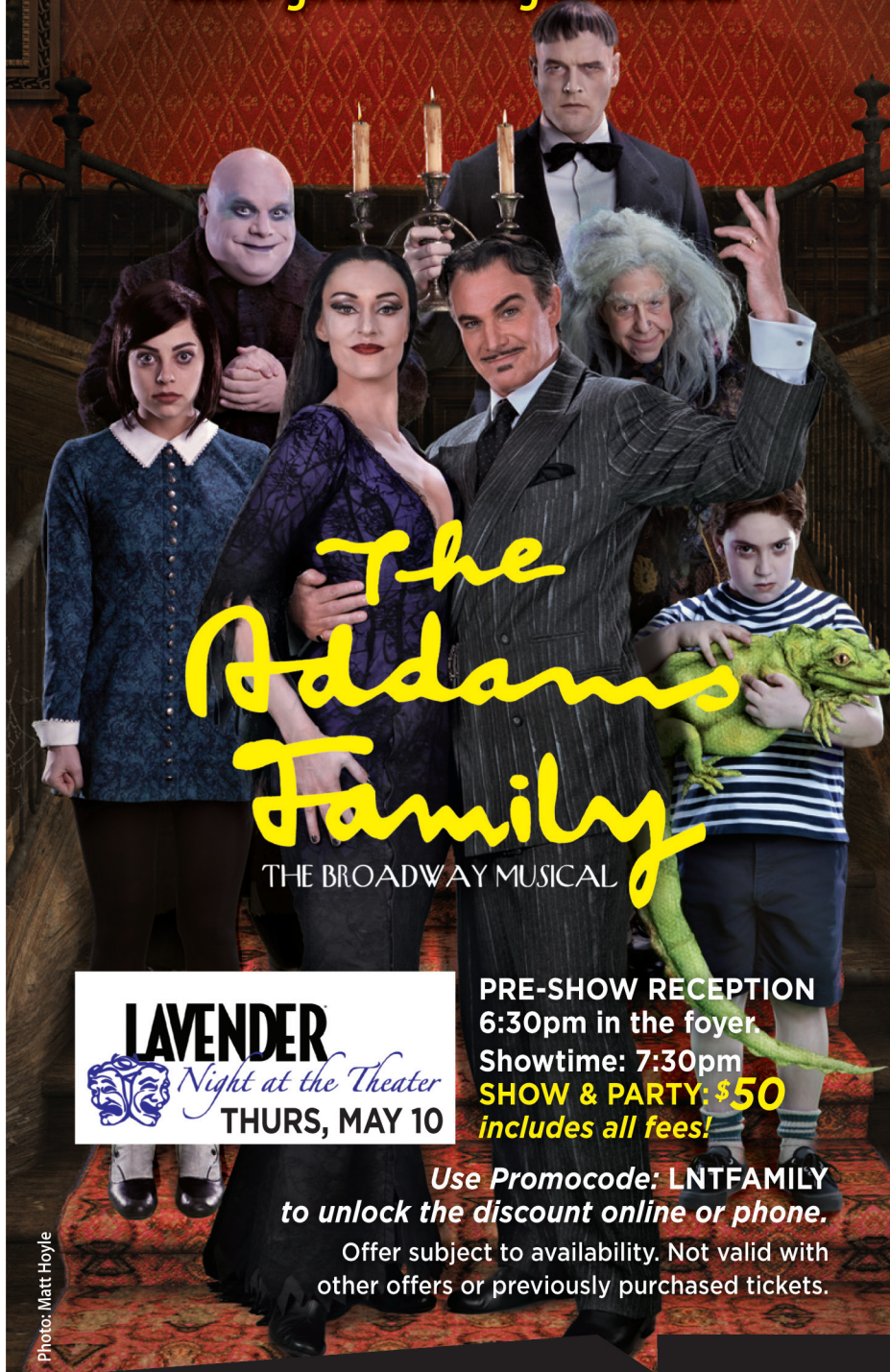
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Photos courtesy of [www.puebloingles.com](http://www.puebloingles.com)

# PUEBLO INGLESE

## Talking Your Way to Spain

"I am exciting to meet you. Please to sit with me," pronounced Antonio in his very best English as we boarded the bus in Madrid. He was one of 20 brave, determined Spaniards who'd signed up for a weeklong program of speaking English 24/7 with 20 Anglos. We Anglos had volunteered our time and vocal cords in return for a free week in Spain. Bus, hotel room, meals with wine—everything but airfare was provided. But the biggest freebie was far more precious—the opportunity, lacking to most tourists, to get to know—really, really know—individuals in the country they're visiting.

Most of us vacationing abroad can interact only with taxi drivers, waiters, and hotel clerks. Here, in the Pueblo Inglese program, the conversations quickly make the leap from "Where do you live/What's your job?" to politics, religion, abortion—and those are merely

the safe topics. Anna, single and in her 30s, shared her feelings about being a professional woman in a man's world; Pablo, about his new baby. Jose agonized over the Afghan war and the economy, and Luisa about raising a rebellious 14-year-old daughter.

When I first heard about the program, it sounded too good to be true. I kept waiting for the time-share promo, but it never came. The only requirement for a volunteer is to be gregarious—and speak no Spanish. Another bonus: The 20 Anglos came from Britain, Australia, Ireland and Canada as well as the U.S., so we also got to make even more international friends. We ranged in age from 22 to 72—everyone from students on college break to retired teachers, a fireman and a construction worker.

The Spaniards were mostly middle-managers or company owners. All were proficient

in textbook English, but terrified of talking. They needed practice in listening and speaking in order to advance in their jobs, which ranged from architect to IT security and solar energy, a Pepsi exec, a magazine editor, the owner of a hair salon, an event planner, and a former government minister.

As the bus bounced through the mountains, it started to snow. Our Australian aboard went bonkers: her first snowfall ever. Meanwhile, the Spaniards reacted like deer in the headlights to our conversational attempts. They simply nodded their heads and responded, "Yes, I think so," trying like crazy to figure out what the guy with the Irish accent was saying, or what lingo the lady from Texas employed.

But a glass or two of wine at dinner promoted proficiency. "A-MAZ-ing!" declared Antonio, a 30-something Energizer Bunny





Photos courtesy of [www.puebloingles.com](http://www.puebloingles.com)

when he learned I was from Minnesota. “Teemberwolves!” he shouted, leaping from his chair with a bucket shot demo and a high-five.

Our days began with breakfast at tables of four—two Spaniards, two Anglos. Then, a series of hour-long, one-on-one conversations. After discussing the verb phrase of the hour (hang on vs. hang out vs. hang in) and an idiom (“I’m all ears”), we rambled along mountain paths to La Alberca, a tiny medieval village a mile away, or cozied up by the fireplace to discuss, well, whatever we wanted: music, movies, jobs, opinions on everything under the Spanish sun.

Once a day two-on-tuos were scheduled. Suggested topics—always controversial—included “English should be the universal language” and “Families should not have more than one child.”

After lunch, a siesta from 3 to 5 p.m.—the only free time of the day. I’d walk into La Alberca to marvel at its half-timber houses, their stone lintels carved with dates from the 1700s. Others would snooze or hit the Internet. At five, we reassembled for a group activity. Divided into eights, we worked together to complete a creative (and competitive) assignment to present to the others, such as arriving at three questions to ask God; formulating a marketing campaign for a new perfume; or enacting a fairytale in mime.

More one-on-ones until theater time at eight, when, after an hour of rehearsal, groups would present hilarious skits, which the program director had

lifted from Monty Python or Saturday Night Live, complete with outrageous costumes from the prop box. Finally, dinner at nine—early for Spaniards, not so for us Anglos: always a choice of two appetizers and two entrees plus dessert. Then bar time and/or a dance party or show, such as the night each nationality was asked to sing a group song. Ours was “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” (duh).

As the week wore on, the Spaniards loosened up. But the language challenges became more complex when telephone conversations were added to the mix in order to negate the clues of body language. First, a one-on-one from adjoining rooms; later, a conference call involving one Anglo and three Spaniards. The “real life” scenario I led was as pretend-exec of an American company proposing to open a restaurant in Madrid with a “team” of Spanish experts: banker, lawyer, and designer. These exercises were guaranteed to drive home the day’s idiom—“Think on your feet.”

Finally, graduation for the Spaniards and a lot of kissing (once on each cheek) for everyone as we exchanged email addresses, set up a Facebook page, and said fond goodbyes. Already, a reunion is being planned among our new best friends.

Pueblo Inglese has operated for over ten years. For information, dates and applications, visit [www.morethanenglish.com](http://www.morethanenglish.com). Then, get set to have fun! ■

Read about Carla’s trip to Madrid online at [www.lavendermagazine.com](http://www.lavendermagazine.com)

## SIDE BAR



The program starts and ends in Madrid, so do take a day or two to explore this dynamic city. The website suggests well-located, budget-friendly hotels as well as must-see sights. The metro is easy to navigate, and shopping is a joy (think: shoes, shoes, shoes).

Check out the neighborhood around Calle Leon for indie designer shops and antiques; Calle Huertas for intriguing neighborhood places to eat; tapas bars such as Lateral, with a menu in English, close to Teatro Espagnol. Stroll through the upscale, modern Mercado San Miguel, just off the iconic Plaza Major (talk about people-watching!). During the annual Madrid Fusion festival, late January to early February, participating bars offer a drink and a tapa for 3 euros, and museums provide food-oriented tours of their works. Stroll through Retiro, the Central Park of Madrid, catch a bullfight or a flamenco show, or laze away your day over a cup of hot chocolate and churros (long doughnuts) amid the locals. Rinse and repeat. For info, contact [www.ineed-spain.com](http://www.ineed-spain.com).



## BIGGAYNEWS.COM: YOUR GLBT WORLD NEWS!



**Talackova**, a transgender beauty queen who was dropped from the Miss Universe Canada competition by pageant representatives, has been given the green light to go by the Donald Trump-led Miss Universe Organization. The 23-year-old will, however, need to prove that she meets the "legal gender recognition requirements of Canada", according to local media.

Canadian model Jenna Talackova attends a news conference in Los Angeles, California April 3, 2012. Photo courtesy of REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni

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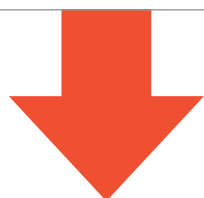
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# CELEBRATIONS AND ANNIVERSARIES



## THE ALIVENESS PROJECT: DINE OUT. DO GOOD.



by Kathleen Watson

The tastiest fundraising event of the year is almost here! Dining Out for Life, the fundraiser for foodies, will be on April 26 at a variety of locations in the Twin Cities, Alexandria, Mankato, St Cloud, Lanesboro, and Duluth. The proceeds from this year's event will go to benefit the Aliveness Project, an organization devoted to encouraging self-empowerment and providing direct services for persons living with HIV/AIDS.

The Aliveness Project has outgrown its current building on 38th and Chicago—serving over 1600 people in a space suited for 400. The organization purchased a new building on 38th and Nicollet which is accessible and spacious. Tim Marburger, the Director of Fundraising and Special Events, says the new building will “expand our opportunity to meet the needs of people physically, emotionally, spiritually.”

The 18th year of Dining Out for Life brings two exciting new opportunities taking place right here in the Twin Cities. Super Ambassadors will host the event at specific restaurants. These Super Ambassadors raised donations for prizes worth a minimum of \$100 that will be given away at their restaurants during the event. Anyone who dines at the restaurant and donates an additional \$50 will be entered to win amazing prizes such as Twins tickets, an iPad 3, and wine and cheese baskets.

Rudolphs restaurant in Minneapolis is going above and beyond for the event with “Dine with the Stars: Dining Out for Life.” Anthony Whelihan, creator and host of the event, decided that he wanted to create a unique dining experience for customers at Rudolphs—a “last supper” with famous celebrities. The ten lucky individuals who were able to book tickets to sit at the main table will be given celebrity masks to wear during dinner. Celebrities “in attendance” will include Amy Winehouse, Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, and many more. All

the money raised from this main table will be donated directly to the Aliveness Project. Contributions from other diners will also benefit the organization. Whelihan's motto for the project is, “if you're going to do this, do it the best!” Make sure to get reservations; with an event like this the whole restaurant WILL sell out! For more information about the Aliveness Project, go to [www.aliveness.org](http://www.aliveness.org).



Photo by Hubert Bonnet





## CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE MN AIDS WALK



by E.B. Boatner

Sunday, May 20, marks the 25th year of the Minnesota AIDS Walks in Minnehaha Park. In addition to the Walk, a 4-mile Run for the Ribbon will kick off the Minnesota AIDS Walk event at 9 AM in the Park.

The Minnesota AIDS Walk route covers about ten kilometers, or 6.2 miles. The Walk begins and ends in Minnehaha Park, following the Mississippi River and takes roughly 2.5 hours to complete. There are six rest stops along the route, each with refreshments, rest rooms, entertainment, and first aid kits. Donations to the AIDS Walk help the Minnesota AIDS Project prevent new HIV infections and keep people living with HIV healthy. Help make 2012 the year that AIDS does an about face and meet the faces behind the Minnesota AIDS Walk—people like the staff and volunteers pictured above. They are part of a team of organizers, idealists, dreamers, and die-hards who believe that together we can make a massive difference in the fight against AIDS in Minnesota.

There are several ways to be part of the AIDS Walk and the Run for the Ribbon: Walk or run yourself; donate through a Walker or a Team to support—they can be found online; or volunteer. It takes literally hundreds of volunteers to put on the AIDS Walk each year, with necessary tasks to be done the day before, during the event and after the event is over.

The schedule of events is as follows:

7:30 AM Run for the Ribbon Check-in

8:00 AM AIDS Walk Check-in

9:00 AM Run for the Ribbon

9:30 AM Health Fair and Park Activities

10:00 AM Opening Ceremony and Entertainment

11:00 AM Minnesota AIDS Walk

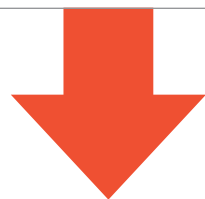
For 25 years, hundreds of walkers have helped raise money to support the Minnesota AIDS Project. For more information visit [www.mnaidsproject.org](http://www.mnaidsproject.org).



Photo by Sophia Hantzes



# OUTFRONT MN CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY



by Kathleen Watson

OutFront MN, the nation's first GLBT statewide group, is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. What started out as a hotline for GLBT resources has now turned into one of the most influential GLBT lobbying groups in the nation. Known for their educational programming, political outreach, legal services, and support for GLBT assault/harassment victims, OutFront MN has been a force for social change and social justice for 25 years.

Monica Meyers, the current Executive Director of OutFront MN, has been with the organization since 1991. Meyers believes that "OutFront really exists to be a catalyst for an expansive network of people who are leading in their communities and working for LGBT equality. At the heart of our work we really hope someday to actually work our way out of a job and not have to do this because we really hope people can just be who they are, love who they love, and be really out about that and not fear discrimination, harassment, violence or isolation."

OutFront MN started in 1987 when it was called the Gay and Lesbian Community Action Council. The organization ran a 24-hour hotline where people could call in with questions about legal services, events, or crisis help. The group then decided that they needed to speak out against discrimination and tailored their services to focusing on promoting social change and justice. OutFront MN was vital in helping pass statewide non-discrimination laws in 1993, and it was the first statewide organization to include trans equality as part of its mission statement.

Now, Meyers notes that the organization does "a lot of education work—we have to be out there changing hearts and minds and getting more people to see LGBT people as people and understand the issues so they can come on the side of being more supportive."

This year, OutFront MN is focusing on a specific policy issue that has become important on a national scale: safe schools. The organization is working with administrators, teachers, parents, and children to make schools bully-free and safe for everyone.

Most notably, OutFront MN is working diligently to defeat the constitutional amendment that aims to ban gay marriage. By uniting with other organizations against DOMA and lobbying incessantly, OutFront MN hopes to change minds and hearts regarding equal marriage. The recent Lobby Day at the capitol was particularly effective due to people sharing their personal stories.

Lobby Day reminded Meyers that these personal stories really do



Photo by Sophia Hantzes

change the hearts and minds of legislators. "What's been so effective is we have these groups of people who are really effective at talking and telling their stories, talking about how some of the issue they see in the local community. They talk about their vision about making a community that really does welcome all people and families. That's the power that has made the changes for legislators."

Meyers's hope is that "legislators become more supportive of LGBT equality and become more aware of all of the different angles of LGBT issues." She also believes that OutFront's lobbying instigates "amazing conversations about 'what could we do in our community to make it a safer place for everybody?' and I think those conversations are inspiring and that it inspires leadership from our elected officials."

OutFront MN will celebrate their 25th anniversary with a reception, ceremony, and party on May 18 at the Walker Art Center. As Meyers suggests, this celebration will be a "balance of honoring the people who contributed to making OutFront successful throughout the 25 years and honoring the current of activists throughout the state and against all odds."

The organization hopes that the party will unite people across age, race, gender, and sexuality. Meyers's goal is to celebrate in a way that fosters community, connecting young teens with older GLBT advocates and people from Greater Minnesota with local activists. "We really hope we created a kind of event where people will meet a bunch of new people, where it will be diverse in every sense of the word of diversity."

The highlight of the anniversary event seems to be the "25 Under 25" awards that will be given out during the ceremony. These awards recognize young local activists who have worked hard to advocate for GLBT rights. Award winners will be recognized for their courage and their contributions to equal rights. Meyers notes that "there's a lot of energy behind it; there's a lot of excitement... It's really fun. It's just inspiring to hear the work that they're doing."

Meyers recognizes the contributions OutFront MN has made toward GLBT equality, but the organizations actions speak louder than words. "We're doing significant work to make our state a better place for LGBT people and everyone else." For more information, see [www.outfrontmn.org](http://www.outfrontmn.org).





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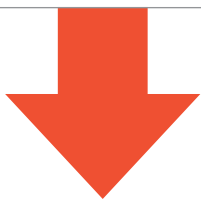
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## ANIMAL HUMANE SOCIETY'S WALK FOR ANIMALS



by E.B. Boatner

The 38th Walk for Animals will take place on Saturday, May 5. Beginning at 10 AM at the Animal Humane Society's Golden Valley campus two- and four-legged participants will wend their way through Theodore Wirth Park, then back to the Animal Humane Society.

The course covers approximately five miles, but, reassures Carrie Libera, the Society's Public Relations Associate, "You can turn around at any point. The Walk for Animals is the greatest way to celebrate the human-animal bond in Minnesota!" She says that Animal Humane Society relies on private donations to provide the programs and services they offer and that the Walk is a very significant part of that funding.

Back at Animal Humane Society fun events will continue until 2 PM and include a "Flealess Market" of pet and people vendors, games for owners and dogs, live music, pet contests, and a pet micro-chip and nail trim clinic.

"The majority of pets that come to the Walk are dogs," explains Libera, "but the Walk also attracts all types of companion animals including cats, parrots, ferrets, rabbits, pot-bellied pigs, guinea pigs, rats—even goats! You never know what you might see!"

Despite drenching April showers last year, more than 5,000 people and 3,000 pets celebrated the 37th Walk. "To have so many thousands of people show up in less than desirable conditions was inspiring. In 2010, much nicer, weather, we had roughly 10,000 walkers and 5,000 animals. We know either way that thousands of animal lovers will come out and show their passion for the work that we do."

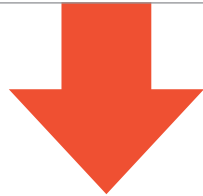
Through its five locations in Buffalo, Coon Rapids, Golden Valley, St. Paul, and Woodbury, Animal Humane Society will help nearly 30,000 animals this year. There is still time to register and raise pledges for the Walk. For more information, visit: [www.animalhumanesociety.org/walk](http://www.animalhumanesociety.org/walk).



Photo courtesy of Animal Humane Society



# FAMILY EQUALITY COUNCIL (FEC) MATURES INTO THIRTYSOMETHING



by Kathleen Watson

The public's definition "family" has changed over the past 30 years, and the Family Equality Council has been around to see it all. The Family Equality Council is celebrating its 30-year anniversary in a year-long, nationwide celebration devoted to families of all different make ups. The national organization has a substantial Minnesota chapter with over 5,000 members, and the Minnesotans will have the chance to celebrate on April 27-28 at the Midwest Family Equality Conference: All Families Matter.

Originally titled Rainbow Families, the Minnesota branch merged with Family Equality Council in 2008 to bond families together on a national level. Mel Rexroad, the Midwest Regional Manager, has close bonds with the Family Equality Council because it provided support to her and her young twins when she moved from Kentucky to Minnesota. Like many others, Rexroad was able to begin raising her children in a supportive environment with the help of the FEC.

Rexroad states that the organization "started 30 years ago with a group of dads called Family Pride Coalition. They were Dads who needed support because they were coming out of heterosexual marriages with kids. This was a time where if you were gay and had kids, you could lose your kids. They came together to have support for one another and help each other be able to keep custody of their kids. It just grew from there and became FEC as it became larger throughout the nation."

This expansion allowed the FEC to become the multi-faced organization that it is today. Rexroad says, "We represent the two million children being raised by 1 million LGBT same-sex families, and by that, we do everything."

The FEC works to change public policies, especially with regard to forms for school and medical appointments. "Your kids go to kindergarten...and you have to scratch out where it says mom and dad. We work with local school districts and at the federal level to change it to say parent one and parent two." This effort truly has paid off; about a month ago, the group was able to get the change made on passport documents and overseas adoption certificates.

Another big aspect of the Family Equality Council is community, and the Minnesota chapter is heavily inspired by the community-based mission of Rainbow Families. Along with a yearly conference,



Photo by Sophia Hantzes

the organization provides monthly baby/toddler groups, dances, parties, and other gatherings to celebrate GLBT families.

The FEC uses lots of communication tools to get the word out about GLBT families. Rexroad says the organization wants to "let people know that our families are more mainstream now than 30 years when FEC started. Even though we're mainstream, we're still special—we have our own issues. We're LGBT families so in some situations we aren't looked on in the same rights and we don't have the same rights as all families. So we want to have our inclusiveness with us but we also want to be included with everyone else."

Because the FEC is a national organization, there will be numerous anniversary celebrations around the country. The Midwest conference will be followed by a huge carnival that is open to the public. The Minnesota branch of FEC will also be hosting a family area at PRIDE with Target. This fills a need that families experience at PRIDE celebrations—an area that is safe and appropriate for the whole family to enjoy.

The FEC has extreme significance for Mel Rexroad because it has allowed her to become an activist. She says, "when I had kids, I didn't think anything about being a quote-unquote activist. And so when FEC merged with RF in 2008, I went to the conference and I listened to the executive director speak. She said something that really stuck with me: she said that the day you chose to have kids, you chose to be an activist for LGBT families and I never really thought about it that way. But then, as a parent and a lesbian...it really stuck with me...that I made a decision to have kids and I'm going to become an activist."

Rexroad's work with the Family Equality Council has been both scary and exciting. On one hand, it has opened her eyes about the bullying and prejudice that GLBT families still face. On the other hand, her work has allowed her to represent her family and thousands of other GLBT families. She states, "what I do is show pride in who I am and our community, and I feel like that's just a blessing to do what I really love."

As Rexroad simply states it, the FEC is "part of making change for our families, for my family."

For more information, please see [www.familyequality.org](http://www.familyequality.org).





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Photo: Meghan Doll Photography

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**B** = Breakfast  
**L** = Lunch  
**D** = Dinner

## PLATINUM LEVEL (35%+)

128 Café **D**  
 Acqua **D**  
 al Vento **D**  
 American Pie Pizza **L,D**  
 Bambú **D**  
 B.A.N.K. **L,D**  
 Bar Abilene **D**  
 Birchwood Cafe **D**  
 Blackbird Cafe **L,D**  
 Bombay Palace **D**  
 Café Ena **L,D**  
 Carmelo's Ristorante **L,D**  
 Chin Dian **D**  
 Christos Greek Restaurant - Minnetonka **D**  
 Christos Union Depot Place **D**  
 Cupcake **B,L,D**  
 Cuppa Java Coffee and Deli **D**  
 eagleBOLTbar **D**  
 El Mesón **D**  
 El Nuevo Rodeo **B,L,D**  
 El Paraiso Mexican Restaurant **L**  
 Elsie's **B,L,D**  
 Falafel King **L,D**  
 FireLake Grill House & Cocktail Bar **B**  
 Great Waters Brewing Company **L,D**  
 The Happy Gnome **L**  
 Hazel's Northeast **B,L,D**  
 The Herkimer Pub & Brewery **L,D**  
 Highland Café & Bakery **D**  
 Himalayan Restaurant **D**  
 Hot Plate **B,L**  
 J.D. Hoyt's **D**  
 Joe's Garage Restaurant **L,D**

Khyber Pass Café **L,D**  
 Loring Kitchen & Bar **L,D**  
 The Lowbrow **L,D**  
 LUSH Food Bar **B,L,D**  
 Maverick's Wood Grill **D**  
 moto-i Sake Brewery & Restaurant **D**  
 Ngon Vietnamese Bistro **D**  
 Pagoda **D**  
 Papa's Restaurant and Deli **L,D**  
 Piccolo **D**  
 Pizza Lucé - Downtown Mpls. (DINE-IN ONLY) **L,D**  
 Pizza Luce - Hopkins (DINE-IN ONLY) **L,D**  
 Pizza Lucé - Seward/Universaity (DINE-IN ONLY) **L,D**  
 Pizza Lucé - St. Paul (DINE-IN ONLY) **L,D**  
 Pizza Lucé - Uptown (DINE-IN ONLY) **L,D**  
 Republic **L**  
 Restaurant Alma **D**  
 Rustica Bakery **B,L,D**  
 The Saloon **L,D**  
 Sawatdee & Zushiya of Maple Grove **D**  
 Sawatdee St. Paul **D**  
 Señor Wong **D**  
 Social House **D**  
 Solera **D**  
 Spill The Wine **L,D**  
 St. Petersburg Restaurant & Vodka Bar **D**  
 Supatra's Thai Cuisine **D**  
 Toast Wine Bar & Cafe **D**  
 Victor's 1959 Café **B,L,D**  
 Wilde Roast Cafe **B,L,D**  
 Yum! Kitchen & Bakery (Take Out Only) **B,L,D**  
**GOLD LEVEL (25-34%)**  
 Anodyne Coffeehouse **B,L,D**

Brookside Bar & Grill **D**  
 Bukhara Indian Bistro **L,D**  
 The Butcher Block Bar & Restaurant **D**  
 Colossal Café - Mpls. **B,L**  
 Colossal Café - St. Paul **B,L**  
 Curran's Restaurant **D**  
 Dixie's on Grand **L,D**  
 Ecopolitan **L,D**  
 Eden Avenue Grill **D**  
 Erté & The Peacock Lounge **D**  
 Grand Café **L,D**  
 Jakeeno's Pizza & Pasta **L,D**  
 Kozlak's Royal Oak Restaurant Wedding & Events **L,D**  
 Lowry Café **D**  
 Lyon's Pub **L,D**  
 May Day Café **B,L**  
 McCoy's Public House **L,D**  
 Moose and Sadie's **L**  
 Palumbo's Pizzeria **L,D**  
 Rainbow Chinese Restaurant & Bar **L,D**  
 Restaurant Aura **D**  
 Rudolphs Bar-B-Que **L,D**  
 Saji Ya **L,D**  
 Sapor Café/Bar **L**  
 Sawatdee Thai Restaurant **L,D**  
 St. Clair Broiler **B,L,D**  
 Zen Box Izakaya **D**  
**SILVER LEVEL (20-24%)**  
 318 Cafe **B,L**  
 The 5-8 Club **D**  
 The 5-8 Grill and Bar **D**  
 5-8 Tavern and Grill **D**  
 8th St. Grill **L**  
 Ah Sa Wan **L**  
 Angelo's Italian Restaurant **L,D**  
 Arezzo Ristorante **L,D**  
 Aster Cafe **L,D**

Bagu Sushi & Thai **D**  
 Barbette **B,L,D**  
 Be'wiched Deli **D**  
 Black Dog Coffee & Wine Bar **L**  
 Black Forest Inn **B,L,D**  
 Blue Point Restaurant **L,D**  
 Boca Chica Restaurant **L,D**  
 Bruegger's Bagels (Eden Prairie) **B,L,D**  
 Bryant Lake Bowl **L,D**  
 The Bulldog Lowertown **D**  
 The Bulldog Uptown **L,D**  
 Bullfrog Cajun Bar **L,D**  
 Buona Sera Ristorante & Wine Bar **D**  
 C.C. Club **B,L,D**  
 Cafe Maude **L,D**  
 Chiang Mai Thai **L,D**  
 Citizen Cafe **L,D**  
 Coffee News Café **B,L**  
 Dunn Bros Coffee (Roseville) **B,L,D**  
 FACES Mears Park **L,D**  
 First Course **D**  
 Galactic Pizza **L,D**  
 Gay 90's **D**  
 Gigi's Café **B,L,D**  
 Ginger Hop Restaurant **L,D**  
 The Glockenspiel **L,D**  
 HauteDish **D**  
 It's Greek to Me **D**  
 Jake O'Connor's Public House **L,D**  
 La Chaya Bistro **D**  
 Lola's Lakehouse **L,D**  
 Lucia's Restaurant and Wine Bar **D**  
 Luna Rossa Trattoria & Wine Bar **D**  
 Manny's Tortas **L,D**  
 Maynard's Restaurant **L**  
 Mendoberri Café and Wine Bar **D**  
 Muffuletta **L,D**

Nonna Rosa's Ristorante Italiano **L,D**  
 Park Tavern Bowling & Entertainment Center **L,D**  
 Pat's Tap **L,D**  
 The Purple Onion Café **B,L,D**  
 Rail Station Bar & Grill **D**  
 Red Stag Supperclub **L,D**  
 Rinata **D**  
 Roat Osha **D**  
 Salut Bar Americain St. Paul **L,D**  
 The Sample Room **L**  
 Santorini **L,D**  
 Scusi **D**  
 Sen Yai Sen Lek **L,D**  
 Spoonriver **L,D**  
 Stanley's Northeast Bar Room **D**  
 Stella's Fish Cafe **L,D**  
 Stir Crazy Fresh Asian Grill **L,D**  
 Tooties On Lowry **D**  
 Tracy's Saloon & Eatery **L,D**  
 Trattoria da Vinci **D**  
 Trotter's Café **B,L,D**  
 Tum Rup Thai **L,D**  
 Uptown Cafeteria **L,D**  
 Vina Restaurant **D**  
 W.A. Frost and Company **L**  
**GREATER MINNESOTA PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS**  
 Alexandria  
 D. Michael B's **D GOLD**  
 Bella's on Broadway **L,D SILVER**

**Duluth**  
 Pizza Lucé - Duluth (DINE IN ONLY) **L,D PLATINUM**  
 Sir Benedict's Tavern on the Lake **L,D PLATINUM**  
 Va Bene Berarducci's Caffè **L,D PLATINUM**  
 Amazing Grace Bakery & Cafe **D SILVER**  
 At Sara's Table/Chester Creek Café **D SILVER**  
 Jitters Coffee & Tea House **B,L,D SILVER**  
**Lanesboro**  
 Old Village Hall Restaurant **D PLATINUM**  
**Mankato**  
 Olives **L,D GOLD**  
 Pub 500 **L,D GOLD**  
 Culvers (5-7 PM ONLY) **D SILVER**  
 Culvers (5-7 PM ONLY) **D SILVER**  
**St. Cloud**  
 House of Pizza **D PLATINUM**  
 Pacific Wok **L PLATINUM**  
 Biology 701 **D SILVER**  
 BoDiddley's Pub & Deli **L SILVER**  
 BoDiddley's Pub & Deli **L SILVER**  
 BoDiddley's Pub & Deli **L SILVER**

For more information, visit [diningoutforlife.com](http://diningoutforlife.com) or call 612-824-LIFE (5433).

The Aliveness Project [www.aliveness.org](http://www.aliveness.org) Rural AIDS Action Network [www.raan.org](http://www.raan.org)



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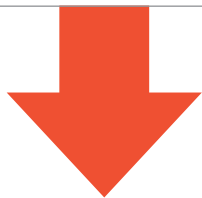






Photo by Sophia Hantzes

## BINGO GETS HITCHED: WEDDING A-GO-GO!



by E.B. Boatner

It's Spring and one's fancy naturally turns to—Miss Ridgefield 1981, swathed in white tulle and chiffon! You can indulge your fancies Saturday, May 15, at Bingo A-Go-Go's "Wedding Bell Bingo" at the Hyatt Minneapolis, a glorious event raising funds for Park House and the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus.

Should you fancy yourself in tulle and chiffon (or tuxedo and tie) all the better—costumes are encouraged, with a contest for the best wedding-themed outfits. Afterwards, you and your sweetie can be pho-

tographed 'neath a nearby trellis. Bingo Babe Shannon (Regan), Park House Representative, says while she still misses Lee Haugee, the other Bingo Babe, she is "very content with her boys in the Chorus. Nearly everyone in the chorus has volunteered to help out, whether it's helping to stage the event, the actual night of the event, and then staying to help clean up. Of course they will also be singing."

Miss Richfield (above, right) adds, in her own inimitable way, "I'll play host for the evening and Barbie Q (above, middle)—always a bridesmaid, never a bride—will be handling balls all night long. Plus Gosh Alice Jones (above, left) will show off her selection of bridesmaids dresses...the wedding planners have reserved some 'head tables' (probably not what I'm thinking but I'm going with it) for those of you who want to sit lose to me and see me perspire."

To date, Bingo A-Go-Go has raised over \$500,000 by producing twenty-seven fun-filled nights of bingo in just nine years. These funds have enabled the beneficiaries to continue to provide top-rate day health services to residents and clients and provide educational outreach throughout the community.

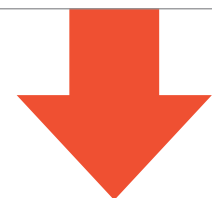
Groups of eight or more receive reserved seating when booking online and specifying a table host. How much? \$35 advance, \$40 door; V.I.P. Head table tickets \$150. Visit: [www.bingoagogo.com](http://www.bingoagogo.com)





Buster, the namesake of Buster's "Rescue Us!" Fundraiser. Photos by Holly Monnett

## RESCUE US! AT THE TOWN HOUSE



by Kathleen Watson

The Town House Bar is hosting the Buster's "Rescue Us!" Fundraiser in order to help raise money for two animal rescue organizations, Last Hope Inc and Top Dog Foundation. With opportunities to sponsor an animal for just \$5 and to "put your friends in jail," this event will be an exciting way to support those who look after all our furry friends. Join your friends at The Town House on May 4 at 9:00 pm to party like (and for) animals.

Last Hope Inc is "dedicated to saving abandoned, unwanted and

helpless dogs and cats" in Minnesota and surrounding organizations. As a registered non-profit organization since 1985, Last Hope Inc has helped save countless pets from abuse, neglect, and death. Last Hope Inc provides animals with medical care, including spaying and neutering to help control population. Animals are fostered by volunteers until they are placed with adoptive families. Last Hope also does not believe in euthanizing animals unless they are suffering from an incurable illness or injury. Last Hope does exactly what their name says—they provide hope and safety for animals in need.

Top Dog Foundation has three specific programs that reach out to both animals and people. The Sanctuary provides "a planned loving and permanent home for dogs that are deemed unadoptable to provide total care for these dogs including lodging, food, grooming, medical attention, with personal care and love." Bentley Grants provide financial assistance to people, doctors, and organizations who have aging dogs with severe medical conditions. Finally, the A Home for Every Aging Heart program places senior dogs with senior citizens in order to develop a sense of companionship which benefits both the dog and the person.

The Town House will be serving \$1 drinks and beer, and attendees will have the opportunity to win a variety of prizes. For more information, go to [www.townhousebar.com](http://www.townhousebar.com).





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## Save the Date!



Fruit Bowl! Photo by Sophia Hantzes

THE SUMMER holds a great many celebrations and fundraisers for our community. Of course, there are many more scheduled than are listed here, so be sure to check our online calendar at [www.LavenderMagazine.com](http://www.LavenderMagazine.com) for more! Please, if you have an event coming up, get it on our calendar and keep us in the loop!

### June 8-10

Pride Institute 2012 Twin Cities Round-up: GLBT community members celebrate recovery, fellowship, and be part of an amazing lineup of speakers.

[www.pride-institute.com](http://www.pride-institute.com)

### June 22

5th Annual Fruit Bowl with Rainbow Health Initiative: Alcohol- and tobacco-free fun for all ages! The event includes bowling, body art, costumes, karaoke, and prizes.

[www.rainbowhealth.org](http://www.rainbowhealth.org)

### June 23-24

40th Annual Twin Cities Pride Festival: Concerts, picnics, vendors, parading, eating, enjoying—all part of the Upper Midwest's largest Pride festival. Though designated a weekend on the calendar, Pride extends throughout the month of June, so check the website for all events.

[www.tcpride.org](http://www.tcpride.org)

### July 14-15

Family Means 20th Annual St. Croix Garden Tour: Garden tour supporting Family Means, the mission of which is to strengthen communities by strengthening families.

[www.familymeans.org](http://www.familymeans.org)

### July 19-22

10th Anniversary Red Ribbon Ride: 4 days, nearly 300 hundred miles, hundreds of riders and volunteers, the Red Ribbon Ride starts at the Mall of America and ends at the State Capitol, all to support eight Minnesota AIDS service organizations.

[www.redribbonride.org](http://www.redribbonride.org) □



## Tim Reardon Named Director of Open Arms of Minnesota



Photo by Sophia Hantzes

OPEN ARMS of Minnesota has announced the appointment of Tim Reardon as their new Executive Director, to become effective April 30. Tim Meyer, Open Arms board President, said, "We are thrilled to bring Tim Reardon on board as the Executive Director. He has a strong track record of leadership in both fundraising and agency operations, and having worked in and around health and human services his entire career, he also brings a passion for social justice. It's a dynamic time for Open Arms, and the search committee and board feel Tim is absolutely the right person to take us into the future, while maintaining our commitment to our clients and our core mission."

Reardon has twenty years of executive leadership experience, particularly in the areas of health and human services, including ten years of international experience directing the Programa San Francisco de Asis, an organization in Peru that provides cleft palate surgery for children. His latest post was chief executive officer of the Reardon Group, a consultancy that works with local governments and nonprofits to enable leadership to achieve better results with fewer resources.

He has also served as executive director of The Bridge for Youth, a \$3.75 million nonprofit dedicated to helping youth in crisis with shelter, support and independent living skills. Reardon brings in-

ternational experience as well, having spent nearly ten years Reardon commented, "I am delighted and grateful to be working with Open Arms.

I have fallen in love with the Open Arms mission. Having lost a family member to can-

cer, I know how vital it is to have people in your life that can provide a good meal during a tumultuous time. I'm grateful to all the people who helped me and know how essential this program is to the most vulnerable people in our community." □



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### Help End Youth Homelessness.

Each night, more than 2,500 youth in Minnesota are homeless. You can help.

**LSS Homeless Youth Luncheon**  
Minneapolis  
May 2, 2012

**LSS Night at the St. Paul Saints**  
*Strike Out Youth Homelessness!*  
July 17, 2012

Register online:

[www.lssmn.org/community](http://www.lssmn.org/community)

Remember how hard  
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We meet homeless youth  
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without judgment,  
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*Ronnie, Nicole and Enzi*  
LSS Street Outreach Team

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*for changing lives*





# BECAUSE

## Conference

THE “B” in GLBT tends to get overlooked by both the straight and queer communities, but the Bisexual Organizing Project (BOP) is raising awareness by sponsoring the Bisexual Empowerment Conference: A Uniting Supportive Experience (BECAUSE), which will be held at Metropolitan State University from April 20-22. This year’s conference marks the 20th Anniversary of BECAUSE.

BECAUSE prides itself on being “an annual event for bisexuals, queers, non-monosexuals, the bi-curious or questioning, and all allies, regardless of sexual or gender identity.”

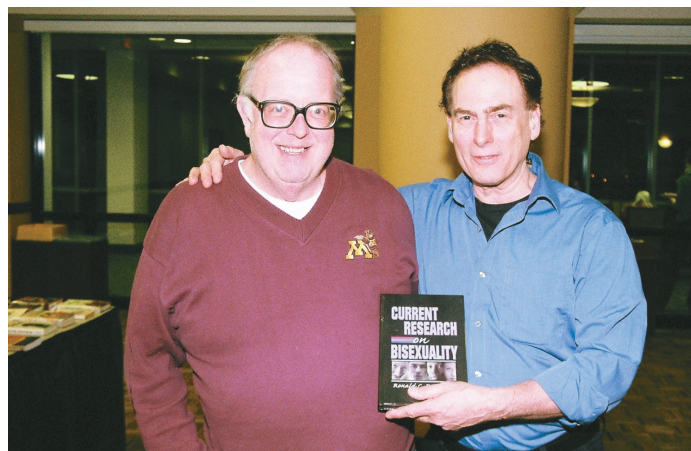
Jim Larsen, the Chair of the Organizing Committee, recognizes that the conference meets a very specific need in the Midwest. “BECAUSE provides a safe environment not only for bisexuals, but people of all identities, to learn about many aspects of sexuality. It is a great place for anyone who is questioning their identity to be able to get information.”

This year’s theme is “Empowerment through Community.” Larsen notes that “one of the critical things for us is to ensure that people who identify as bi know there is a community of other bisexuals out there. It is often hard for bis to find that community and feel a part of it. BECAUSE creates that sense of community where they can freely express who they are and not only will no one will question it, but they will celebrate it with them.”

Dr. Marge Charmoli, a former presenter at BECAUSE and co-producer of BiCities, relates with Larsen and says “I felt alone in the Twin Cities, I didn’t know there was a bi community. When I went to BECAUSE, it was like going to a religious experience.”

One thing that makes it difficult to find a community feel within the bi world is the sense of biphobia coming from both the straight world and the queer world. There are a lot of myths surrounding the bisexual experience, particularly regarding identity and monogamy.

Larsen states that “unfortunately, biphobia shows up in a lot of ways. Many GLBT people may have first identified as bi before realizing they are gay or lesbian. Because that was their journey, they think people who identify as bi



Photos by Sophia Hantzes



**One thing that makes it difficult to find a community feel within the bi world is the sense of biphobia coming from both the straight world and the queer world.**

just haven't taken that next step. But for us, it isn't a phase. It is who we are."

Larsen also debunks the myth that bisexuality is synonymous with promiscuity. "There is also the perception that we can't be satisfied with just one partner because we will always be looking for a partner who is a different sex than who we are with. That is just a myth. Bisexuals are just as capable of monogamy as anyone."

While this conference focuses on celebrating bisexuality, all people are invited to attend in order to gain an understanding and appreciation for the bisexual experience. Through educational workshops and connecting with people who identify as bisexual, one hope of the conference is that people develop a greater understanding of bisexuality.

Larsen emphasizes the historical importance of the noteworthy anniversary. "We really wanted to honor the work that has been done by all of the people who have been part of BECAUSE over the years."

BECAUSE is honoring the past by inviting back all of the conference's keynote speakers from the past 20 years. Larson says "these speakers are nationally known activists, researchers, and voices in the areas of bisexuality and sexual identity." Eight speakers are returning, including Lisa Diamond, Ph.D. (professor at University of Utah), and Robyn Ochs, who is hailed by some as the "mother of the bi movement."

The history of BECAUSE shows how activists used the conference to meet a true need for bisexual advocacy in the GLBT world. Larsen states that "BECAUSE was started here in the Twin Cities by activists who recognized the need for both information and a sense of community around bisexuality. It has been held in the Twin Cities, Iowa and Wisconsin. One important aspect is that BOP (Bisexual Organizing Project) was created as the sponsoring organization for the conference. Now, BOP not only sponsors BECAUSE but also attends all regional Pride festivals and has other programming focusing on bisexuality."

With an increase in interest over the past 20 years, the conference is preparing for more attendants by offering "more workshops than ever." There will also be a dance, a cabaret, and many other socializing opportunities sprinkled throughout the educational weekend.

Larsen's hope for the weekend is that individuals develop a stronger sense of community and embrace their identities, whatever those identities may be. "We hope BECAUSE empowers people as individuals and as a part of a greater community."



Photos by Sophia Hantzes



# STEPHANIE MILLER'S SEXY LIBERAL COMEDY TOUR

Saturday, May 12th, 8:00p.m.  
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starring...

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# Just effin' music



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Dr. Marge Charmoli (left) and Dr. Anita Kozan (right) flying the bi flag proudly. Photo by Sophia Hantzes

## Ten Years of BiCities! on TV

Calling itself “a show by, for and about the bisexual community and our friends and allies,” BiCities! will celebrate its tenth anniversary in September 2012. Founded in 2002 by Dr. Marge Charmoli and Dr. Anita Kozan, BiCities! offers programming focused on educating the bi community and demystifying myths surrounding bi people.

Run by volunteers and produced for public access cable and the internet, BiCities! features interviews with national and local figures in the bisexual community. Co-producer Marge Charmoli says that the goal of BiCities! is to “get the bi community together” and to “create visibility for the bi community and use it as educational outreach.” Charmoli also says that it’s important to have programming like this because the bi community is so invisible—most events or programs are specifically straight or gay.

The show offers hope, information, and reminds bi people that they are not alone in this world. Charmoli says the best thing about producing this show is that they are “touching other people in a meaningful way—we’ve changed people’s lives.”

Charmoli recalls several moments where listeners reached out to tell their sto-

ries and thank BiCities! for the work it has done. Most notable was a woman from India who showed up at the 2010 BECAUSE Conference after hearing a BiCities! broadcast online. The woman looked up information about bisexuality online and caught the particular BiCities! episode regarding the conference. Three days later, she was at the conference and embraced into the bi community, feeling for the first time that she wasn’t alone.

Although Charmoli says “it’s hard to get bi visibility,” she is honored to know that BiCities! has had such an impact on individuals. For more information including past shows and upcoming broadcasts, visit [www.bicities.org](http://www.bicities.org). □

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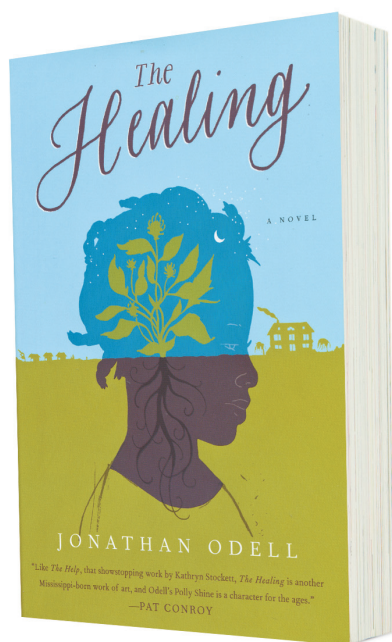
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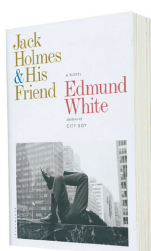


***The Healing***  
**Jonathan Odell**  
**Doubleday**  
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Healing's double threads bind an 1858 Mississippi slave plantation to the arrival in 1933 of a mute child on the doorstep of Gran Gran, an ancient woman still living on that plantation property. Odell weaves the story of young Granada (now an elderly recluse), once pampered pet of the plantation owner's wife, then "fallen" to mere assistant of Polly Shine, bought to heal master's cholera-stricken slaves. Seeing Granada's abilities, Polly Shine inexorably draws them out. A tremendous plot, but the heart of Odell's book is story: If another owns your name and story, then who are you? Polly, without an albus-ex-machina, restored stories and lives to her fellow slaves—and Granada; now Gran Gran summons old stories that a lost girl might claim as her own.

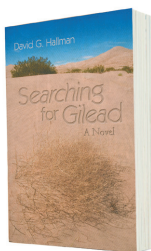
***Riding Fury Home: A Memoir***  
**Chana Wilson**  
**Seal Press**  
**\$17**

By anyone's standards, Karen (Chana) Wilson led a hellish childhood. After her first suicide attempt, mother Gloria was sent to an institution for repeated electric shocks then returned home; father Abe decamped for a year's work abroad; 10-year-old Karen waited and listened every night, to remove the last burning cigarette from Gloria's lips, to pick her up later off the bathroom floor, then went to school every morning. But as even traumatized children will, Karen grew up, went to college, became Chana, and discovered women. And now the story becomes breathtakingly interesting. Gloria pulls out of her decades-long morass, gets clean, gets an education—gets a girl. Lots of girls. Both become counselors. Their reunions, recriminations and epiphanies can only be comprehended by reading Wilson's book.



***Straight: The Surprisingly Short History of Heterosexuality***  
**Hanne Blank**  
**Beacon**  
**\$26.95**

"Forever" happens only in romance novels and campaign debates. "Heterosexuality" hasn't always meant "straight," nor "straight" always had to do with sex. Blank says "heterosexual" sprang from the pen of Karl Maria Kertbeny on May 6, 1868, writing to Karl Ulrichs creating language concerning areas of the Prussian Penal Code that harshly punished certain sexual behavior. Wry, witty and thoroughly researched, Blank's text shows the power mantras like "always" wield. She offers the word doxa, or, simply, "what everyone knows." How they know it is crucial. I say, "Emily is a slut." A few more echo me, and Emily is a slut, even if Miss Dickinson sits scribbling poetry in her room. Listen for "It's always been..." "Everyone knows that..." in the coming debates. □







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A gay rights activist holds a board which reads, "Homophobia is illegal", during an unsanctioned protest rally to defend the rights of Russian gays and lesbians in St. Petersburg April 7, 2012. REUTERS/Alexander Demianchuk



Gay rights activists share a kiss during an unsanctioned protest rally to defend the rights of Russian gays and lesbians in St. Petersburg April 7, 2012. REUTERS/Alexander Demianchuk



A gay rights activist holds a sign up to a window of a police minibus, after being detained for taking part in an unsanctioned protest rally to defend the rights of Russian gays and lesbians, in St. Petersburg April 7, 2012. The sign reads: "A lady friend of our family is a lesbian. Together with my wife, we love and respect her. Her way of living is as normal as ours. And her family is socially equal to ours". REUTERS/Alexander Demianchuk



Interior Ministry officers detain a gay rights activist during an unsanctioned protest rally to defend the rights of Russian gays and lesbians in St. Petersburg April 7, 2012. The board reads, "No to the hushing up of crimes towards gays and lesbians". REUTERS/Alexander Demianchuk



Norwich University is the nation's oldest private military academy and the first private military academy to host a gay pride week, March 28, 2012. After the repeal of the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, a gay pride group staged a "Queer Prom" and a "Condom Olympics" at Norwich University as part of the first gay pride week at any of the nation's public and private military academies.



Richard Schneider, the president of Norwich University and a retired rear admiral in the Coast Guard Reserve, speaks at the university in Northfield. REUTERS/ Herb Swanson



Rusty Griffin, a member of the Norwich University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Question and Allies Club, speaks at the univeristy in Northfield. REUTERS/ Herb Swanson



Rob Morris, a member of the Norwich University LGBTQA, stands in the university, in Northfield. REUTERS/ Herb Swanson



Joshua Fontanez , president of the Norwich University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Question and Allies Club, speaks at the university in Northfield. REUTERS/ Herb Swanson



# Against the Amendment

THIS WEEK, we sat down with Regional Organizing Director Michelle Dibblee and Field Organizers Nick Kor, Liza Scott, Elizabeth Nordland, and Alison Froehle of the Minnesotans United for All Families field team to talk about the conversation happening in Minnesota around voting No in November to defeat the marriage amendment.

**Lavender Magazine:** What is it about having the conversation about the marriage amendment that is so important to defeating it?

**Michelle Dibblee:** We know there are a lot of people who know gay people that do not support marriage for same-sex couples. Study after study shows that creating a personal connection with people is the best way to get our friends and family to vote no, because they know how it will affect someone they care about in their life.

**LM:** It sounds like these conversations make a big difference. How does a conversation about marriage for same-sex couples and voting no on the marriage amendment typically go?

**Alison Froehle:** They are all different. I have had some great conversations, some really surprising conversations, and conversations that didn't go as well as I had hoped. Most people are surprised at how easy it is to have the conversation after you just start talking to someone about it. The hardest part is just starting the conversation.

**LM:** Knowing the conversations can be intimidating to start, what would you tell

someone who wants to start having conversations with the people in their life?

**Elizabeth Nordland:** Start slow. Pick people who you think might already be supportive of marriage for same-sex couples and ask them about voting no in November. These starter conversations can really help people build some confidence and get a feel for how conversations like this feel. The most important thing you can do is start simple, and talk about why the issue is important to you and why you care about it. It might feel weird at first, but you will definitely get more comfortable once you start having a conversation.

**MD:** I agree with Elizabeth. So many of the people we talk to are somewhere on their journey to understanding and acceptance. It is important to remember to be open to actually listening to people's inner conflicts about marriage for same-sex couples. Get comfortable asking about their thoughts and talking about your own personal experiences.

**LM:** How are these conversations going to help people on their journey to ultimately vote no on the marriage amendment?

**Nick Kor:** As Michelle said, be open. There are times when the conversation can be uncomfortable, but remember: that's okay. The first conversation is just planting the seed and getting people to think about it. From there, we can better understand where they are on their personal journey and what we can do to help them along. Many people don't fully realize how this

amendment would affect LGBT people and when you tell them the ways it will, they listen. It has a real impact.

**Liza Scott:** Nick is absolutely right. When people voice their opinion on marriage for same-sex couples and the amendment, we can better understand how to talk to them about it. Many people don't realize that same-sex couples want to get married for similar reasons as straight couples.

**LM:** What do you think is considered a successful conversation with someone about voting no on the amendment?

**AF:** Beginning the conversation and getting people to think deeper about the issue is a success in itself. Like we said, this is just planting the first seed and you can develop it from there, but if you don't start somewhere, there is no way to get people to realize how important it is to vote no.

**MD:** Alison is right, that is the most important part. Often, politics is very abstract, but this amendment is very personal and it feels like Minnesota is voting for or against us. So it is our job to help Minnesotans understand the personal nature of it through conversation. That is how they will vote no come November. Remember: you don't have to necessarily get anyone to vote no right away – you just need to start talking about it. ■



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## Tea Time

*You may not think of high tea as a simple event, but that's just what it is,*

Such a fuss is made over the semantics of afternoon tea versus high tea. As elegant as afternoon tea can be, high tea is the loveliest way for true friends and close family to gather together. Some are confused about the expectations for each kind of tea; they suffer from the misconception that tea is tea, whether it's afternoon or high. In fact, afternoon tea and high tea are two very different events.

Afternoon tea for many homes at the turn of the 19th century was described as 'the great trial.' Rigid rules and formal rituals gave hostesses a perspective of the social fluency of guests. The formality of afternoon tea also gave a hostess the opportunity to show her family's status in society while allowing her to form social treaties. Afternoon tea will be the subject of another column, so for now let us focus on high tea.

High tea takes place as an evening meal, much like supper. It is a casual affair, not the place for eggshell-thin teacups or refined porcelain. Not only is the food not delicate, it's often made at the table where the meal is served. High tea is often served in the kitchen or den rather than the front parlor or mahogany-topped dining table set aside for more formal affairs. On the kitchen table, you will find thick slices of hearty bread, hardboiled eggs and quiche. Toast slathered with butter and honey was my childhood favorite. On the stove, the teakettle is kept warm with heavy teas like English Breakfast, Earl Grey or a good Oolong. Ornamental teas like Jasmine Pearl are reserved for showier events. Speaking of showy: leave the ornamental china and sterling silver urns to the side. The same goes for the linen napkins. Simple food, simple tea, simple settings and simple friends are all you need for high tea. Conversation is more lively than polite, centering on politics and current events. Sandwiches made with heavy mustard and ham and thick slices of cake are passed. After children and the fragile retire for a pillow upstairs, ale, port and schnapps come out for the guests, poured into the glasses



Photo courtesy of [www.sxc.hu](http://www.sxc.hu)

at hand so that dishes and clean-up are kept to a minimum.

In a conversation long after my grandparents had passed and their house was sold, I reminisced with my brother about our favorite place in their home. The upstairs rooms and grand staircase had no appeal to us; it was the basement kitchen, the site of many family meals and high teas, which brought us the fondest memories. I recall fondly helping make the buttered honey toast. On Sundays, the day's large meal was served at 1 pm after church, with high tea at 6 pm.

Served in the low ceilinged basement kitchen with little fuss, it was a good time with close friends and family gathered together to drink and share conversation. Lively banter revolving around deeper beliefs was always on the table, a far cry from the polite talk of the formal upstairs rooms.

But my memories aren't just of the simple food, the table, and the room. What made high tea so special in my grandparents' home was the relaxed atmosphere that put everyone at ease—even someone as notoriously uptight as Grandmother. □



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DATELAND | Jennifer Parello

# Keep Your Pants On

I HAVE acquaintances who are unnaturally proud of their 2-year-old son's penis. Each time they drop by my house—which, frankly, is far too often for my nervous system to bear—they ask me the same question. It's a question that I'm fairly certain would get them arrested in most states and many Caribbean countries.

"Hey, Jennifer," they say, with a bit too much sparkle in their eyes, "have you ever seen an uncircumcised penis?" And before I can answer, they whip off the kid's diaper as if he was a performer in a Vegas strip club. And there it is, in all of its toddler glory, a baby uncircumcised penis.

"Very nice, very grand," I say, trying to avert my eyes. But the kid, encouraged by the bizarre attention, typically takes the cue to thrust his arms in the air like a young Caesar, and proceeds to parade around the house pants-less for the rest of the visit.

Even though I'm a lesbian, I've seen my share of pee-pees (my preferred term for the object). I came out relatively late in young adulthood, so I had several opportunities to dabble with men. I don't have a problem with pee-pees as long as they keep their distance. When they get excited, they seem kind of angry. And that's why I don't like them pointing at me. On the occasions that they have, I've always felt like I'm being accused of a terrible crime by a fierce prosecutor. "YOU did this to me," it seems to be saying. "You and those large breasts of yours."

And, in answer to the question posed by the weirdo parents mentioned above, yes, I have seen an uncircumcised penis. I tell them this every time they ask the question, but they never remember the story because they are far too weirdly obsessed by their own kid's member to pay attention to my anecdotes. (This explains why I con-

sider these people acquaintances and not friends. Anyone who prefers their child's penis over my bon mots will never be a friend of mine.)

Here, then, is the story of the first time I saw an uncircumcised penis.

It was at a dinner party. A very sophisticated party hosted and attended by gay men. I was the only woman invited—a great honor! Usually the only woman at a gay boy party is someone like Lee Radziwill, straight, chic and eats nothing but vapor and compliments. I think it speaks very well of my ability to entertain and charm that gay men regularly choose me, a lesbian with unruly hair and a tendency to dribble wine on herself, to be the token lady.

The party was going very well until there was a squeal of excitement and terror from the kitchen. We all ran in and found our host laughing uncontrollably at the pork roast he had just removed from the oven. He pointed at it, too hysterical to speak. Soon, all the men joined in the laughter.

"What's so funny about a roast?" I asked.

"Have you ever seen an uncircumcised penis before?" the host asked. Apparently, the roast looked exactly like one. Up to that moment, I hadn't seen one. So, the host helpfully ran to his bedroom and returned with a stack of porn magazines dedicated to men with foreskin. And, that, pretty much signaled the end of the dinner party. As I grabbed my coat, I glanced at the group of men ooohing and ahhhhing while they flipped through the pages.

So, before you ask me the question again, the answer is yes, I have seen one. And, no, I don't want to see another one. But good for you if you have one! Just, please, keep it contained when you're around me. □



## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Community Connection brings visibility to local GLBT-friendly non-profit organizations. To reserve your listing in Community Connection, call 612-436-4698 or email [advertising@lavendermagazine.com](mailto:advertising@lavendermagazine.com).

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### Dear Ms. Behavior:

I'm a complete bottom who has a wonderful partner who wants me to "top" him. I just can't bring myself to do this because I don't have it in me. I know he really wants me to because he asks about once a week, but I always just push it aside. I feel that sex between us is great the way it is now. I'm not so sure he feels that way himself. It's not a big concern, but it IS an issue. We've been together for almost a decade already and we're definitely in this for the long haul.

How do I get over being a "bottom"? Perhaps I need to nip at the sherry before dinner.

-CONCERNED BOTTOM

### Dear Concerned Bottom:

Consider the reasons for your hesitation. You need not force yourself to do something to which you feel violently opposed. But if your doubt is based mostly in fear or embarrassment, you might try to push through it, especially if you're also curious or at least open-minded. It sounds like you love your partner and plan a life together, so you may as well include as much sexual variety as possible.

Ms. Behavior has an encouraging story to share: Her friend Vinnie, a big truck driver, was a committed legs-over-his-head bottom until he turned 40. Then Vinnie fell in love with Manuel, the biggest nelliest bottom who ever sashayed across God's green earth. Vinnie couldn't imagine giving it up to Manuel, so he rose to the occasion just to test it out. (Unfortunately, Vinnie, who was

Ms. Behavior's housemate at the time, chose to test it out on the kitchen table, where Manuel was treated like an hors d'oeuvres. Thank God for antibacterial soap.) Though skeptical at first, Vinnie took to topping like a natural and has enjoyed a life of versatility ever since.

Yes, Ms. Behavior knows that when a gay man claims to be "versatile" it generally means that he's a bottom who's capable of getting on top if urged with either a large loaded weapon or several bouquets of flowers.

Anyway, if you decide to test it out, bring a very butch outfit. When you step outside your comfort zone, costumes go a long way. Good luck in your topping endeavor. Ms. Behavior and her readers will be anxious to hear how it goes.

### Dear Ms. Behavior:

I was recently dumped by the woman of my dreams. She didn't even have the courtesy to tell me why; instead, she stopped returning my calls and answering my e-mail. Finally, when I managed to get hold of her, she said it just wasn't working for her. This is after a fabulous four months together, great sex, and sharing our most intimate feelings with each other.

I feel like I should just forget about trying to meet another woman. I am totally blown away by this experience. But I feel sexually deprived.

Any advice?

-FORLORN LESBIAN

### Dear Forlorn Lesbian:

It's never a good idea to make a grand plan for a life of spinsterhood right after you get dumped. Be dramatic if you need to and invest in the wardrobe and accoutrements (sweatpants, mallomars, book-of-the-month-club, multiple felines), but don't commit to it.

You're right, however, that this may not be the best time to meet, court, and marry someone new. You'd probably just project your hurt and insecure feelings onto your girlfriend, which would make you feel like a needy cling-on, and wouldn't bode well for a healthy relationship.

Your ex sounds like a nightmare; a person who doesn't have the courtesy to return your calls or offer an explanation after several months of dating probably has some serious emotional issues.

This would be a good time to think back about whether there were any clues that she could be so dismissive or that she wasn't as connected as you might have imagined. If you can feel more confident about reading someone else's signals in the future, it may make you feel less fragile.

In the meantime, it doesn't make sense to plan how long to stay alone because it will really depend on how you feel. Once you think you can see someone clearly —you won't confuse her with your ex-girlfriend or your rejecting mommy —then you'll be ready to meet someone new.

And until then, make sure you masturbate a lot. Sexually deprived people often seem grouchy. ■

TROLÍN, UN DIABLITO ROSA



The ants are getting back from a hard workday, and they are coming home to rest.  
Les fourmis reviennent d'une dure journée de travail pour se reposer à la maison.



Let's f---!  
Fourrons!



A little ant is getting home late... poor little thing! Huff... huff...  
Une petite fourmi accuse du retard... pauvre petite! Pfouf... pfouf...



What do you mean, poor little thing? I was f---ing the grasshopper!  
Pauvre petite? Je fourrais la sauterelle!

POR RODRO



## CLASSIFIEDS

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### EVENTS

Tapestry LGBTQ 1st Thursday Contra Dance at Tapestry Folkdance Center May 3, 2012, 7:00-10:30pm with band Eelpout Stringers and caller Ted Hoddap. \$10 general, \$8 members, \$7 students, free admission to kids 13 and under. No partner is necessary to participate. Sponsored by Allina Hospitals and Clinics. Tapestry Folkdance Center, 3748 Minnehaha Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55117. (612) 722-2914. www.tapestryfolkdance.org.

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## Tapa-Dancing Through Madrid

The reign in Spain is over. Ferran Adria, renowned as the world's best chef, has closed his frontier-pushing restaurant (just as equally iconic Charlie Trotter has called it quits in Chicago). Adria's molecular gastronomy—devised as much in a chem lab as in a kitchen, and copied by many an aspiring chef around the globe—has run its course, as most food fashions do. Its passing paves the way for two equally rewarding trends I spotted in Madrid: a chance for forward young cooks to shine, and a rebirth of well-

loved traditional fare, but with homage newly paid to honoring the best products available—in particular, well-cared-for beef, pork and seafood.

Nowhere is this more evident, and rewarding, than in the panoply of tapas offered—the little plates, a mere bite or two, served as munchies to accompany a drink. In fact, that's how the practice started. Back in the day, to woo customers, a barkeep offered a free nibble with each glass of wine or beer, served on a tapa, or cover, atop the glass. At

bars, such as the one adjoining my hotel on Calle La Cruz, that's still the case. With my glass of red appeared complimentary slices of sausage and toasts spread with pesto. In fact, during Madrid Fusion, Madrid's annual two-week gastro-celebration starting in late January, many a bar offers a drink and a tapa for the special price of 3 euros. To continue the food focus during Fusion, museums provide special food-themed tours of their collections (think Adam and Eve with the fatal apple; Christ's Last Supper, etc.)





The best thing about tapa-hopping is that there are no rules (well, just one. A fellow ordering a Coke was chastised as a rube: No Coca with tapas. Other than that, munch away, from 10 a.m. to 3 a.m., before, or (as I made a habit) instead of dinner, which gets underway just short of midnight.

Start your day, or end it, with a cup of dark, dense, hot chocolate and a plate of churros—long, light doughnut fingers. Best of the best are found at Chocolatier San Gimes, a block from iconic Plaza Mayor. White-coated waiters, mirrored walls, marble tables—just as it's been since the 1800s.

Then fast-forward a block west of the plaza to the market of tomorrow, Mercado San Miguel. It's Tapas Central. Under one roof dozens of upscale stalls present their specialty: brochettes of olives, a seafood stand. Here, macaroons and arroz con leche, over there, caviar—all displayed like gems in a jewelry store. The sherry bar offers six sips and six tapas for 35 euros. We feasted on sweet peppers stuffed with tuna and brochettes of chorizo twined with capers.

Then, just like the Madrilenos, we drifted elsewhere for our next bite. At fashionable Estado Puro, traditional tapas have been deconstructed, then reassembled with imagination. At Puerta 57, a glitzy bar overlooking the soccer stadium, we gobbled portobello sliders and a creamy, egg-rich potato tortilla. In another trendy bar, the showstopper was Russian salad (yes, those diced veggies in mayo that Grandma served her bridge club), along with mussel croquettes and skewered octopus with a garlicky dip.

Sula, urbane and clubby, offered saucers of paella and skewers of pork belly. Viavelez, equally modish, enticed us with tender, cod-



Photos courtesy of [www.sxc.hu](http://www.sxc.hu)

stuffed croquettes, more Russian salad (this time, presented in tiny pastry shells), and plates of tangy olives.

Forging onward, we discovered a sweet little hangout near the Prado serving octopus meatballs, air-cured ham, and toasts loaded with arugula and tomatoes: tastes as eternal as the museum's art. Then a blast from the past in a dive with a nautical theme and soccer on the screen. It won our hearts with a fry of fishes tinier than minnows stirred into scrambled eggs.

My very favorite tapas-hopping locale is the plaza fronting the Teatro Español. First stop is always Lateral, embraced for its English menu that divides its taste by category: meat, seafood, cheese, vegetables. As usual, I over-ordered, despite my waiter's warning, then staggered away after a feast of fried liver layered with beef carpaccio; smoked salmon atop creamy brie; mixed veggies in pesto on toast; and a bouquet of batter-fried eggplant slices to dip in spicy tomato sauce.

When I came up for air the next night, I crossed the street to Vinoteca Barbecheron for a glass from its well-curated list to accent grilled peppers warmed with mozzarella and a classic potato tortilla. Just time for a final café con leche before I hop back on Iberia. Wait, wait! Onboard, they're serving us tapas, too! To eat your way through Madrid, check out [www.ineedspain.com](http://www.ineedspain.com).

## GAY SCENE

**Gay marriage** has long been legal in Spain, and Chueca is the main dating drag of Madrid, lined with clubs, bars, saunas and discos. The drill: dinner at 10, bar scene at 1, discos until 4.

**Gay Pride Week** begins June 27

**Sleazy Madrid** debuts April 27, a congregation of international fetish men featuring three major parties

See [www.Gaymadrid.com](http://www.Gaymadrid.com) for listings of bars, cafes, discos, saunas and shops to suit your fancy.





# JONATHAN ADLER

## Brings an Added Chic to Uptown



Jonathan Adler. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Adler

MINNEAPOLIS, it is time to welcome your newest recruit. Accomplished potter, designer, and TV personality Jonathan Adler successfully launched a new store in Uptown March 23.

"It's always exciting to open a new store," Adler said. The designer stressed that shoppers can expect a full-on Jonathan Adler experience.

An eclectic mix of bold colors combined with intriguing graphics awaits the shopper as they enter his store. Coupling his joy of design with impeccable craftsmanship, Adler believes he could strike a chord with his new Minneapolis audience. "I think the Minneapolis shopper is hip, savvy and ready for something new – I am hoping they will love us," the designer said.

Each one of his stores is loaded with his "wares, credos, manifesto, and oeuvre." Adler's modernist store brought 2,780 square feet of the designer's latest creations from his 2012 collection. His eclectic taste can be seen in the designs found in the store: everything from furniture and bedding to lighting, ceramics, tableware and books. He even adds his special touch to hot pink umbrellas and orange candles.

"Minneapolis has a groovy, young design scene and populace," Adler said. "And I worship at the temple of Prince, so I'm hoping he'll stop in. As for Uptown, it just felt right – I'm excited to join other design shops and restaurants in the neighborhood."

Beginning his career as a potter, Adler described the natural urge to branch out: "I found an Aids to Artisans workshop in Peru to produce all of my production pottery, which also produces hand-woven textiles," he said. "It was a natural next step to make pillows and throws. Then I thought, why not make a sofa for the pillows and throws?"

Adler's stores now offer such a variety in goods that he describes it as "a production nightmare, but a dream come true."

For those thinking that Adler's designs might be too modern or eclectic for their tastes, the designer offers some wisdom on that topic as well. "I always say that your home should make you seem more glamorous and more eccentric than you really are," Adler said.

---

**JONATHAN ADLER**  
1439 W. Lake Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55408  
[www.jonathanadler.com](http://www.jonathanadler.com)





Photos courtesy of Jonathan Adler







## The Little Things

I'M STANDING in my grandmother's kitchen. She has black and white linoleum flooring. There's a frying pan on the stove with grease in it. It smells like her here. Like her fried chicken. Like her moisturizer.

I'm sitting on my mom's bed with the satin sheets. I'm holding my pet rabbit, watching television as my mom gets ready for bed. I see her pearls hanging from her vanity, and I smell her smell. She smells like the feeling you get when you hear the word "gorgeous."

I'm in my aunt's Cadillac. We're on our way to see *Phantom of the Opera*. She rented me a tuxedo and she's wearing a fancy dress. I hear her talking to me, and I hear myself responding, but I'm not really listening. She smells like glamour. I want to be like her.

I'm sitting in front of my computer at a coffee shop, thinking of what I will write to you. There is an older lady sitting by a window. She's reading a newspaper and sips from a mug once in a while. I think it's tea.

They creep up on us, these moments. It's when we least expect it that we're suddenly looking at our lives, at our memories, and remembering things not because they are noteworthy, but because they make us who we are. These are the little slices of life that, for whatever reason, stand out.

These moments mean nothing to anyone else but to whom they belong, and they cannot be fully described. They cannot be

relived. Out of context they are totally mundane. But to us, they mean everything. We remember them as vividly as we do our darkest tragedies and our proudest triumphs.

Imagine a co-worker telling you, "I went to a coffee shop last night and I smelled coffee beans. I sat in a comfy chair and people-watched. It made me remember when I was in college, when we were in study groups. I remember how soft the chairs were, and how we procrastinated as much as we could. Whenever I smell coffee, I remember this."

You'd probably think him strange to share such a boring story, to unveil such a vanilla truth. But you have a million such treasured memories. About how the grass smelled when you played in it as a kid. About what it felt like to play with your Matchbox cars and Barbie Dolls. You remember smelling wrapping paper at your birthday parties, and the wind in your face when you rode your bicycle.

They are inevitable, and they are invisible. We don't get to pick which details we'll remember, but it will take just hint of a smell, a vague silhouette of an image, a nugget of similarity, to fill you with nostalgia and overwhelming, vivid memory.

The night my mother died, I remember holding my rabbit on her bed, looking at her jewelry on her vanity. I remember peeking into her bathroom to see her washing her

face. And I remember later standing outside, in the ambulance lights, smelling the spring air.

We remember random details about our lives, sometimes around events that change who we are. But more often and just as vivid, the details we remember are the ones connected to the rest us—the 99% of life that's more routine and less memorable.

Today, when I smell someone wearing my mom's perfume, I picture myself on her bed, watching television—not the night she died, but our routine. Her perfume makes me remember her—not her death.

They are only apparent to us in retrospect, these memories. We don't decide what facets of life we'll remember. We didn't go to birthday parties as kids to smell wrapping paper. We didn't roll around in grass to find out what it felt like. But we remember these things better than we do the presents we got or what games we played.

So my point, like these memories, is simple. Pay attention to the details—enjoy the little things as we live them, because, as someone said once upon a time, "one day you will look back and realize the little things were the big things." ■

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